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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A STUDY OF

THE FACT-VALUE RELATIONSHIP

BASED ON

AN EVALUATION OF HUME'S

TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE

BY

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The undersigned certify that they have read,

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acceptance, a thesis entitled:

THE FACT-VALUE RELATIONSHIP

submitted by ARTHUR WESLEY CRAGG in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The thesis concerns itself with the relationship between facts and values. The discussion develops from an analysis of Hume's Treatise. The Treatise is interpreted as a systematic attempt to develop a theory of human conduct within which moral judgments can be explained. Given this context, the central problem of the thesis might be considered to be the relationship of moral philosophy to theory of conduct.

Following the structure of The Treatise, the first chapters are concerned with the basic influencing factors in human behavior. Reason, sense data, and the emotions are discussed as the three fundamental categories in human experience. The usefulness of each category in understanding behavior is evaluated and the impact of each on an understanding of the fact-value relationship is discussed.

The second chapter considers pleasure and justice as the two fundamental principles of human conduct. An attempt is made to assess the value of both concepts to a theory of conduct.

Hume's moral philosophy is based upon the five concepts mentioned above. Chapter three describes the development of this philosophy. Hume is criticized because his subordination of ethics to theory of conduct prevents the development of any method for evaluating moral standards on their own merits.

Chapter four is concerned less with specific problems than with an assessment of Hume's methodological approach to the subject under consideration. In the process of this analysis an attempt is made to outline the various factors in moral judgments. We conclude by saying that Hume's approach to the subject precludes a consistent or complete analysis of

morality. Finally, the implications of our findings for an understanding of the fact-value relationship are briefly discussed.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of explanation and justification in human behavior. The treatment is conceptual in nature and approaches the subject from a different point of view. The purpose of the appendix is to reinforce the conclusions which resulted from the analysis of Hume's Treatise. As such the appendix might be considered a test case for the various ideas developed in the main body of the thesis.

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"I cannot forbear adding to these reasonings an observation, which may, perhaps, be found of some importance. In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surprized to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is, and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, it is necessary that it should be observed and explained and at the same time that a reason should be given for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention would subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason."[1]

It is appropriate to start a paper on the relationship between facts and values with this quotation from Hume. In many ways it has set the tone of recent discussions on moral philosophy. As MacIntyre points out in his paper on Hume on 'Is' and 'Ought,'[2] this passage serves both as a starting place for many moral philosophers and as a defense of the conclusion that fact and value are distinct and logically unrelated.

Why should this passage stand out to the neglect of the rest of Hume's Treatise? Perhaps it is used because it appears to support the views of many contemporary moral philosophers. It would appear to be valuable to have the weight of history supporting one's theory. On the other hand, the passage states in a remarkably concise manner many of the important problems which must be considered if the fact-value relationship is to be

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[1] Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Oxford, 1896.

[2] A. C. MacIntyre, Hume on 'Is' and 'Ought,' Philosophical Review, 1959, p. 451.

understood. Herein lies the value of the passage if not the reason for its popularity. With this in mind, the introduction will elaborate on some of the problems which are expressed in the above quotation with a view to introducing some of the ideas which will be discussed at length in the thesis.

In situations where one wishes to make a moral judgment, an attempt is first made to determine the circumstances at the time of the action or decision of the person concerned. Legal judgments are a good example. Only after the court is satisfied that all the facts have been reviewed is a judgment made. The problem occurs when one passes from the facts to an expression of values. What is it which allows one to pass from what is the case to what ought to be the case? Is there some logical relationship which permits the transition? It is this transition from the "is" to the "ought" which Hume feels to be extremely important. The value judgment appears to express a new relation which is not present in the factual description of the situation. The quoted passage points to the need to analyze this transition which frequently occurs but is rarely explained.

It is not sufficient to point only to the transition. There are other factors involved. Is there something inherent in the world of objects which makes value judgments necessary or possible? This must be investigated because of the apparently close relationship between observations about the world and evaluative statements. Certainly many moralists imply that value judgments follow necessarily from purely empirical situations. As a result it is necessary to understand the role of facts in moral judgments.
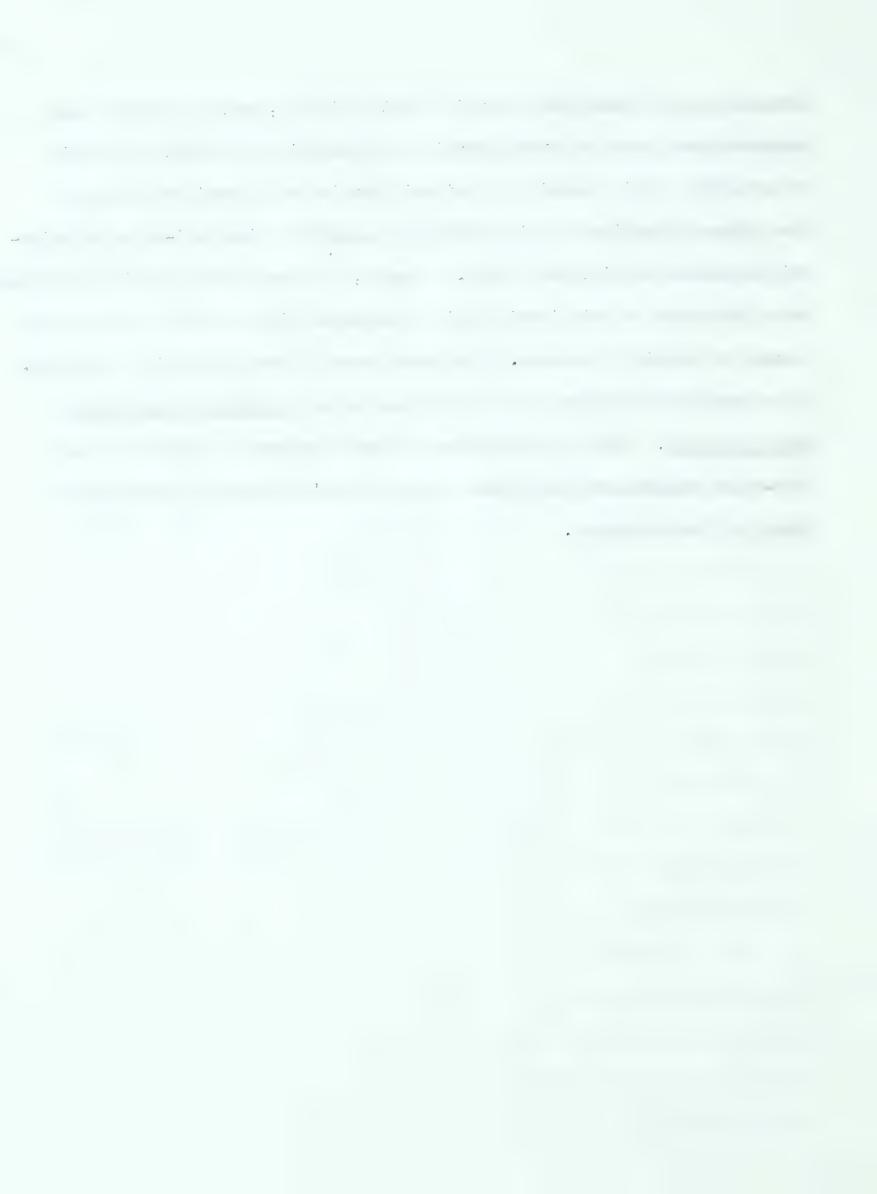
Even this is not enough. The transition which occurs appears to be based on some logical premise. How does reason fit into the picture of factual as opposed to evaluative statements? Is it not possible that morality derives from purely rational grounds and is consequently super-imposed on the empirical world by the individual? This approach would appear to account satisfactorily for the transition without doing violence to our concepts of morality. In addition, this approach would separate questions of fact and value, thus providing a less complex view of the world. But does this allow us to explain the fact-value relationship?

Hume analyzes both views expressed above at great length in The Treatise. However, there are two additional factors which he considers to be important but which are not mentioned in the above quotation. The first has to do with the role of the emotions in human conduct. How do the various desires and needs affect the moral view of the world which each individual has? Do the emotions play a primary and determining role; or are they merely additional factors which influence actions but not moral judgments?

.The second factor is concerned with the place of society in the whole question of morality. Perhaps it is facts about society which provide the empirical basis for moral judgments. This might well be the bridge between values and facts.

Each of the problems discussed above is developed at length in the pages which are to follow. In addition to these, there is one further question which is a part of all these problems and which could be said to develop out of each in turn. This theme may be summarized as the relation-ship between theory of conduct and moral philosophy. Is moral philosophy an

integral part of theory of conduct? That is to say, would a complete and
accurate description of human behavior also describe adequately the basis
of morality? Or is morality a distinct question which must be developed
from separate premises? This problem is essentially the fact-value relation-
ship expressed in different terms. However, it does indicate that the problem
being discussed in this thesis must be concerned with more than just specific
answers to specific problems. The whole arena of human conduct is involved.
It is just this that Hume sets out to analyze in The Treatise concerning
Human Behavior. Thus any evaluation of Hume's success in describing the
fact-value relationship must also consider Hume's success in developing a
theory of human conduct.

CHAPTER I: THE ROLE OF 'REASON' AND 'IMPRESSIONS' IN HUMAN CONDUCT

EXPOSITION

"...the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely
on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason."[1]

This sentence summarizes and concludes the controversial passage
quoted earlier. Clearly understood, it holds the key to Hume's position on
the fact-value relationship. This chapter will consider the meaning and the
implications of the passage quoted above.

Hume begins his Treatise with an attempt at categorizing human experience.
The first category, perceptions, includes all contents of consciousness.
Sensations, emotions, memories, ideas, and all other mental occurrences
fall under the heading of 'perception.' Very little time is spent by Hume
in defending or explaining this first and broadest category. It would
appear that Hume does not consider this first point to be either particularly
revealing or controversial. However, the definition does seem to imply an
acceptance of the Lockean two-world view, i.e. that which is perceived and
that which causes the perception. The epistemological problems raised by
this view are not serious if one is only concerned with Hume's sceptical
attacks on earlier theorists. On the other hand, if one is concerned with
evaluating Hume's positive contributions the difficulties implicit in Hume's
first category become apparent.

Perceptions, in turn, sub-divide into two groups called 'ideas' and
'impressions.'

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[1] David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Oxford Press, 1896, p. 469.

"The difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force
and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind, and make
their way into our thought or consciousness. Those perceptions,
which enter with the most force and violence, we may name 'impressions';
and under this name I comprehend all our sensations, passions and
emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul. By 'ideas'
I mean the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning; such as,
for instance, are all the perceptions excited by the present discourse,
excepting only, those which arise from the sight and touch, and
excepting the immediate pleasure or uneasiness it may occasion."[1]

Hume goes on to suggest that "everyone of himself will readily perceive the

difference between feeling and thinking."[2]

The distinction made by Hume is a traditional one. The reason for the

distinction is clear. Hume is concerned to categorize the important mental

processes before proceeding to the establishment of the nature of the various

influences on human conduct and their relative importance. 'Ideas' are

defined as the creation of reason, but originate in 'impressions.' 'Impressions'

are closely tied to the feelings and result from the operation of the five

senses.

It is interesting to note that feeling at this point is used by Hume

in a very wide sense. It includes not just emotions but all sensations

experienced by a person.

There is a close, almost one-to-one relationship between ideas and

impressions. In this connection Hume says:

"The first circumstance, that strikes my eye is the great
resemblance betwixt our impressions and ideas in every other
particular, except their degree of force and vivacity. The one

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[1] Ibid, p. 1.

[2] Ibid, p. 2.

seems to be in a manner the reflexion of the other; so that all the perceptions of the mind are double, and appear both as impressions and ideas. When I shut my eyes and think of my chamber, the ideas I form are exact representations of the impressions I felt; nor is there any circumstance of the one which is not to be found in the other."[1]

Further,

"I perceive therefore, that tho' there is in general a great resemblance betwixt our complex impressions and ideas, yet the rule is not universally true, that they are exact copies of each other."[2]

Finally,

"...every simple idea has a simple impression, which resembles it; and every simple impression a correspondent idea."[3]

The relationship indicated by the above quotations is an important one. Ideas cannot be said to have an independent existence. Although there is not a one-to-one relationship in every case, yet Hume does make clear his view that all ideas are stimulated by impressions. Any idea which cannot be shown to be derived from an impression is meaningless. Reason, or the mind, cannot create meaningful ideas which have no connection to the empirical world.

The purpose of the distinctions made above is to isolate reason and analyze independently its influence on human behavior. If the role of reason is not a creative one, exactly what part does it play?
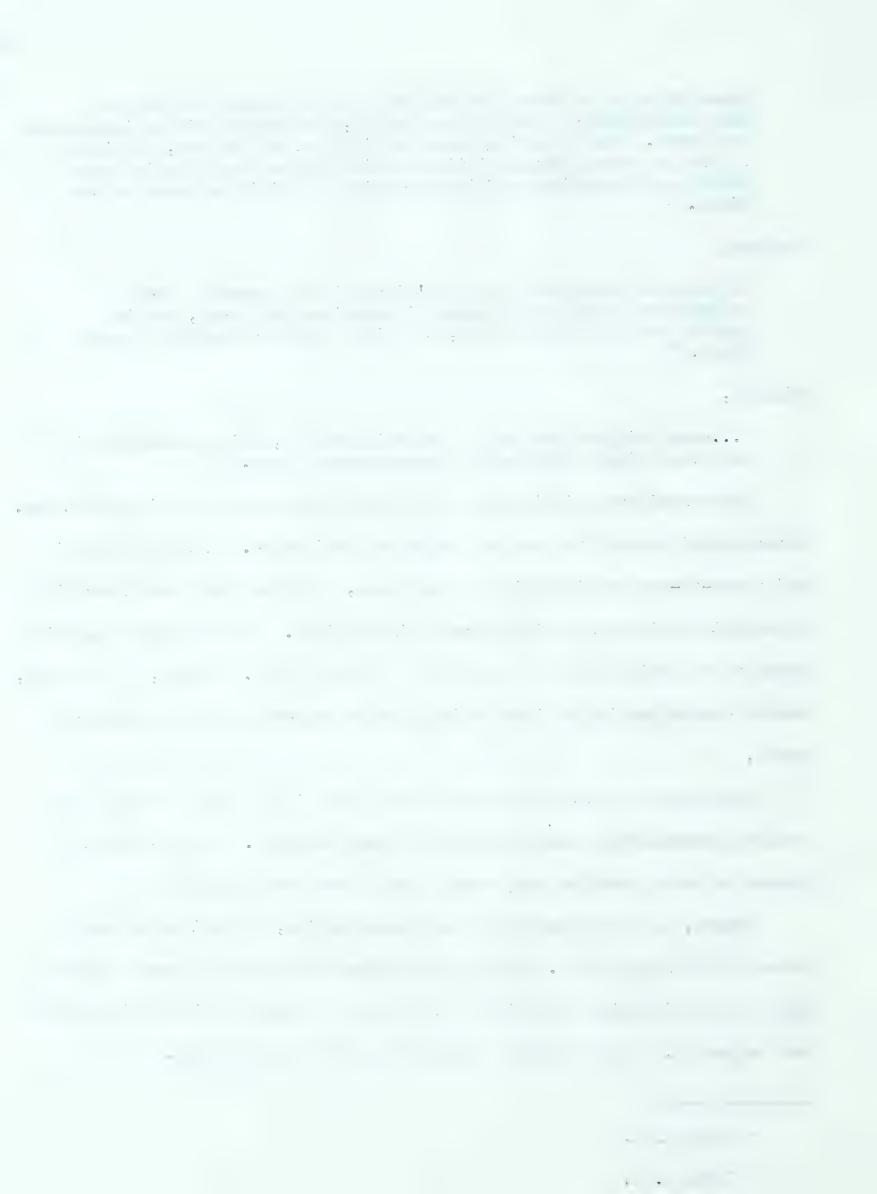
Reason, also referred to as the understanding, is best understood in terms of its limitations. Reason can neither initiate nor prevent action. Man is not stimulated to action by the reason as many previous philosophers had suggested. Reason plays a supporting, not a leading role.

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[1] Ibid, p. 3.

[2] Ibid, p. 3.

[3] Ibid, p. 3.

Hume, as a rule, sub-divides his categories into two areas. Reason is no exception. Hume breaks down the operation of the reason into two distinct categories.

"The understanding exerts itself after two different ways, as it judges from demonstration or probability; as it regards those abstract relations of our ideas, or those relations of objects, of which experience only gives us information."[1]

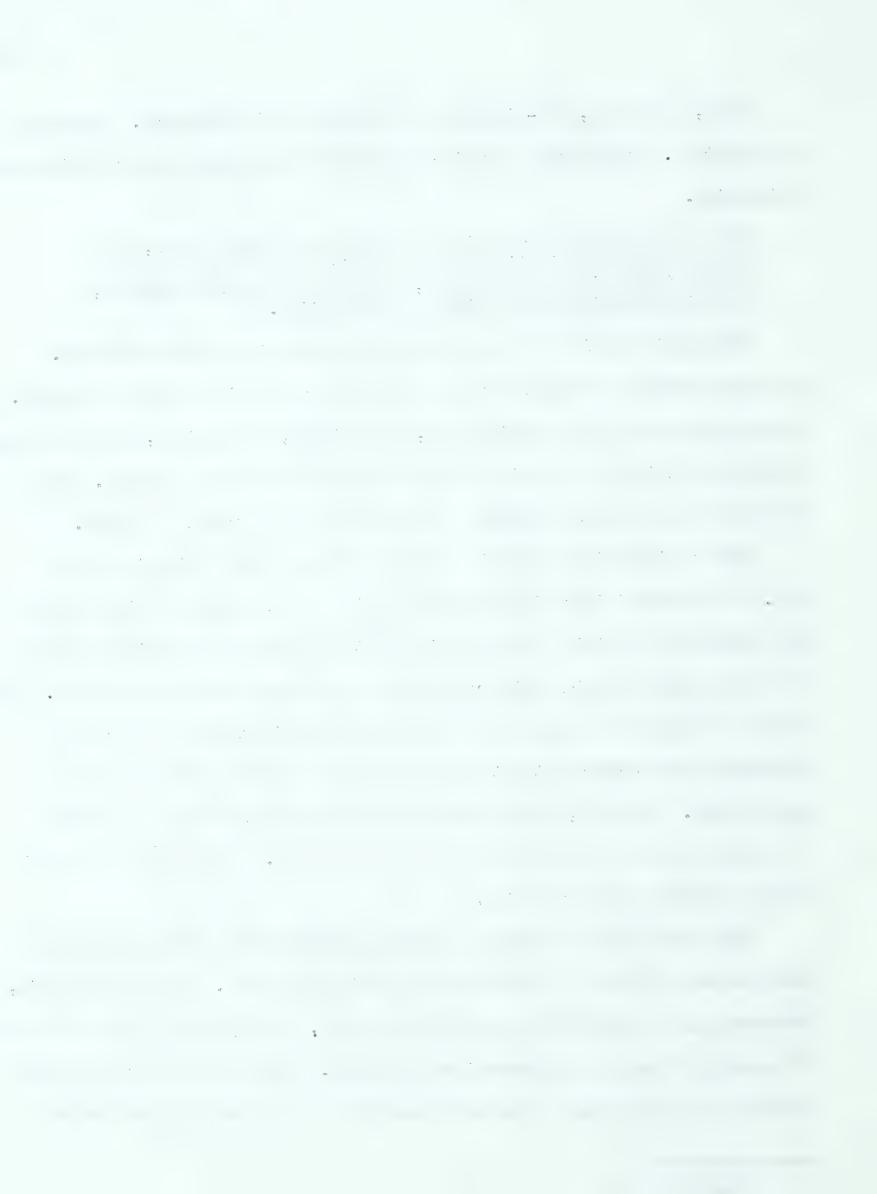The first function of the reason is thus seen to be "demonstration." The best example of "demonstrative" reasoning is seen in Euclidean geometry. Working from one or more definitions, assumptions, or premises, reason deduces conclusions which can be said to follow logically from the premises. The conclusions are usually referred to as analytic or a priori in nature.

Hume contends that reasoning of this sort can never motivate one to act. The argument takes two forms which will be referred to at this point and explained in detail in the section of this chapter on causation as well as in the second chapter which will deal specifically with human conduct. In order to disprove the theory that conduct can be stimulated by a priori judgments, Hume demonstrates the limitations of logical necessity and its application. Secondly, Hume attempts to demonstrate that the only source of human motivation is to be found in the "passions." More will be made of these arguments at a later time.

The second type of reasoning concerns the relations holding between and among matters of fact or judgments about matters of fact. The cause of pain, for example, is traced to the proximity of fire. The various methods available for escaping the pain are determined by reason. The resulting action caused by the pain is directed by the understanding so as to best achieve the ends

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[1] Ibid, p. 413.

determined in this case by the feeling of pain and the accompanying desire for relief.

Reason, on Hume's theory, develops methods for analyzing sense data as they appear. Mathematics is an example of this function. It also deciphers impressions as they occur and directs the resulting action so as to best meet the demands of the emotion concerned. Reason does not initiate or stimulate action. From this it follows that reason cannot oppose a demand made by the emotions. Its role is inquisitive and analytical. Through the operation of the understanding, information is gathered which allows the 'passions' to achieve their goal. Reason is thus considered to be the "slave of the passions."[1]

If behavior is not caused by 'ideas,' it must spring from 'impressions.' In order to describe the nature of impressions and contrast them meaningfully with 'ideas,' it will be useful to distribute perceptions under three headings: 'ideas,' 'impressions,' and 'emotions.' 'Impressions' are the sensations or using G. E. Moore's language, sense data. Reason or the understanding, analyzes and catalogues the sense data. The third category is somewhat different. The passions, or as I reinterpret, the emotions, are the basic human motivation. Although Hume lumps the impressions and the passions together, they do have somewhat distinct roles to play in the explanation of human behavior.

The passions combine with the external sense data in initiating action. Both are identified as impressions by Hume because their source is the real

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[1] Ibid, p. 415.

world. Ideas, on the other hand, Hume considers to be mere replicas or copies of impressions. Reason can combine, decipher, and store these impressions, but it cannot create new ideas. The impressions are the material and reason the tool. The roles of impressions and ideas in human action are distinct, but complementary.

This somewhat dualistic view of mind and matter is the basis of Hume's denial of the possibility of a clash between reason and the emotions. Contrary to the opinions of many of his predecessors, Hume does not feel that mind can rule the emotions; "'tis impossible, therefore, that the passions can be opposed by, or contradictory to truth and reason; since this contradiction consists in the disagreement of ideas, considered as copies, with those objects which they represent."[1] It is as unlikely that an image reflected by a mirror disagree with the object reflected as an idea contradict or oppose an impression or feeling.

There are two instances where an apparent contradiction might occur. When the understanding is mistaken about the real world or a part of it, an action may result which is self-contradictory. If the understanding chooses a poor method of achieving an end sought by an internal impression, the two ideas and impressions may appear to be contradictory.

At this point it is necessary to halt our exposition of Hume's doctrine and trace the course and purpose of his argument. Hume is clearly interested in isolating the influence of the reason. His purpose is two-fold. He is concerned to disprove the theory which bases the justification of morality

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[1] Ibid, p. 415.

and moral behavior on a priori reasoning. Secondly, he wishes to discover the relationship of reason to moral conduct as well as to explain the place of reason in human conduct generally. To accomplish these ends, Hume, at this stage in the argument, must demonstrate the inability of reason to prove or demonstrate matters of fact from a priori grounds. He must then show that the same mechanisms used by science to explain empirical occurrences can be used to explain human behavior. Both steps are vital to the development of Hume's theory of human conduct.
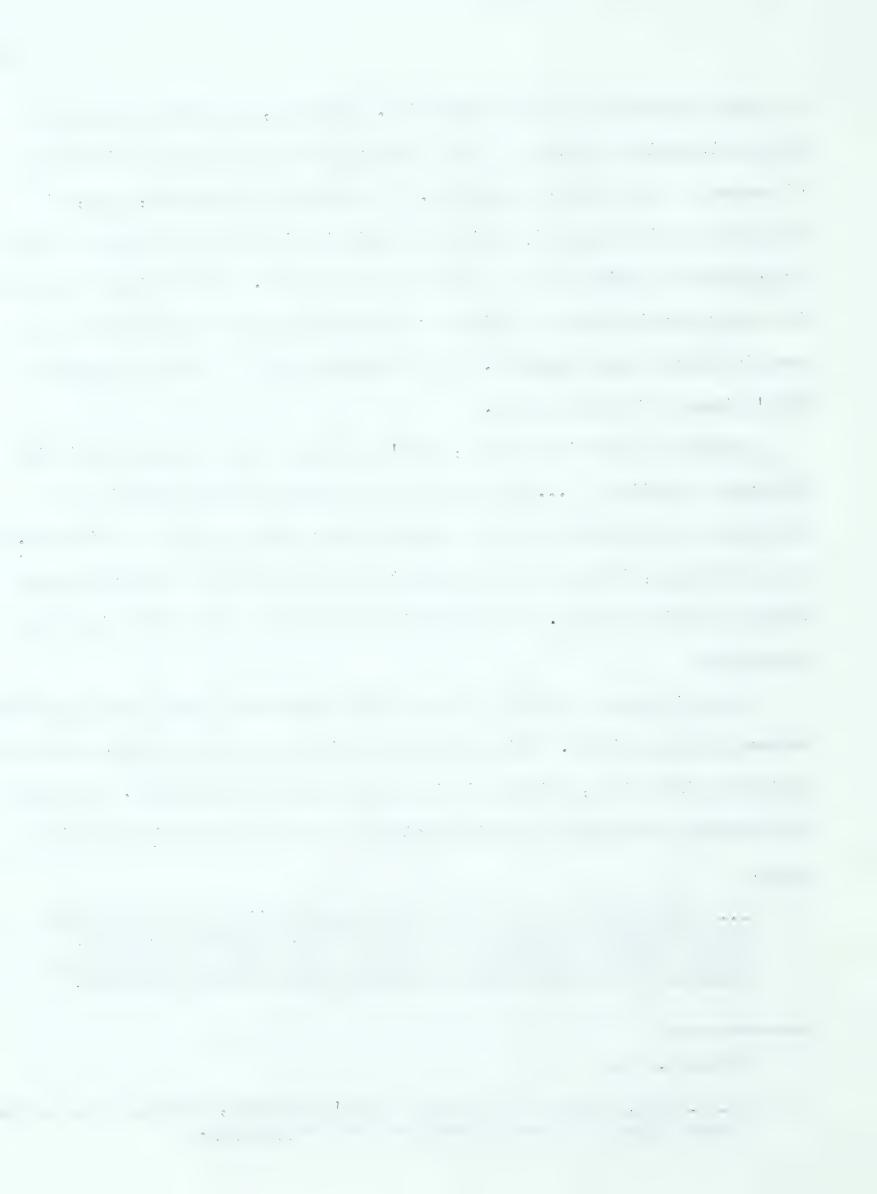
Regarding a priori reasoning, Hume's position can be summed up with the following quotation: "...the necessity of a cause to every beginning of existence is not founded on any arguments either demonstrative or intuitive."[1] To my knowledge, there are four arguments which Hume uses to demonstrate the validity of his position. The arguments are outlined in the following four paragraphs.

In Hume's view, a priori or demonstrative reasoning reveals only relations between and among ideas. This view is very similar to the more recent analytic synthetic distinction, although it is not as thoroughly developed. Hume does not approach the argument directly; rather he uses an analogy to make his point.

> "...it seems difficult to imagine that any relation can be discovered betwixt our passions, volitions, and actions, compared to external objects, which relation might not belong either to these passions and volitions or to these external objects, compared among themselves."[2]

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[1] Ibid, p. 172.

[2] R. M. Kydd, Reason and Conduct in Hume's Treatise, Oxford, 1946, p. 46. Note: This is a direct quotation from the Treatise.

And further,

"It is not sufficient to reply, that a choice or will is wanting.
For in the case of parricide, a will does not give rise to any
different relations, but is only the cause from which the action
is derived; and consequently produces the same relations, that in
the oak or elm arise from some other principles. It is a will or
choice that determined a man to kill his parent; and they are the
laws of matter and motion that determine a sapling to destroy the oak
from which it sprung. Here then the same relations have different
causes; but still the relations are the same; and as their discovery
is not in both cases attended with the notion of immorality, it
follows, that notion does not arise from such a discovery."[1]

The argument can be summed up in the following manner. If morality

derives from demonstrative grounds, then it is based on relationships

either between ideas or objects in the real world. Yet the same relations

hold between nonrational or inert objects as hold between rational creatures.

But, as Hume points out, no one would suggest that moral judgments can be

applied to inert objects. Following from the analogy, Hume concludes that

facts about the empirical world cannot be derived from a process of demonstra-

tive reasoning, since that faculty can only establish the relationships

between and among ideas.

The second argument springs from the notion of contradiction.

"We can never demonstrate the necessity of a cause to every new
existence or new modification of existence, without showing at the
same time the impossibility there is, that any thing can ever
begin to exist without some productive principle: and where the
latter proposition cannot be prov'd, we must despair of ever
being able to prove the former." "...The separation, therefore,
of the ideas of a cause from that of a beginning of existence,
is plainly possible for the imagination; and consequently the
actual separation of these objects is so far possible, that it
implies no contradiction nor absurdity; and is therefore in-
capable of being refuted by any reasoning from mere ideas;
without which 'tis impossible to demonstrate the necessity of
a cause."[2]

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[1] Ibid, p. 46. This is also a direct quotation from the *Treatise*.

[2] *Treatise*, op. cit., p. 79.

The argument is simply that in order to show that causality is a necessary principle in the operation of the empirical world, one must prove that it is absurd, i.e. a contradiction in terms, to imply that an event or an occurrence does not have a cause. Hume points out in the quoted passages that it is clearly not absurd to suppose that an event does not have a cause. It is interesting to note that Hume would have been reassured by the theories of modern physics.[1]

The first two arguments are clearly related. The following arguments strike a different note and are in turn related to each other.

Hume's third argument derives from his description of the relationship between ideas and impressions. "...all our ideas are deriv'd from, and represent, impressions."[2] This point has been made earlier. Reason has not the power to create or discover new facts about the world merely through an examination of our ideas. Necessity in the empirical world must, if it is a fact about the empirical world, be discovered through experience. Therefore, causal necessity could never be proven through an appeal to reason alone.

Finally, Hume argues that necessity is not an empirical fact. Here again the proof is in the form of an analogy. The sequence of events used occurs during a game of billiards. One observes a billiard ball strike a second billiard ball. The result is also observable. However, it is not the case that one observes the first ball cause the second one to move. Stated differently, one does not observe power passing from the one object

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[1] Hume makes this same point in the Treatise, op. cit., pp. 80-82.

[2] Treatise, op. cit., p. 163.

to the second. One observes only a sequence of events. Causality is inferred, not observed. Therefore it is not the case that necessity can be shown to exist and operate in the empirical world.[1] The arguments brought forward thus far are in Hume's view adequate evidence that causal necessity, or as he puts it, "necessary connection,"[2] cannot be proven by the reason nor demonstrated by the senses. However, the argument must be further developed. It is the case that we do make predictions, often very accurately, concerning empirical events. The question which must now be answered is 'On what grounds do we make predictions and does this provide sufficient basis for an analysis of human conduct?'.

Hume's views on this aspect of his argument are concisely stated in the following passage:

"Before we are reconcil'd to this doctrine, how often must we repeat to ourselves, that the simple view of any two objects or actions, however related, can never give us any idea of power, or of a connection betwixt them: that this idea arises from the repetition of their union: that the repetition neither discovers nor causes anything in the objects, but has an influence only on the mind, by that customary transition it produces: that this customary transition is, therefore, the same with the power and necessity; which are consequently qualities of perceptions, not of objects, and are internally felt by the soul, and not perceiv'd externally in bodies? There is commonly an astonishment attending everything extraordinary; and this astonishment changes immediately into the highest degree of esteem or contempt, according as we approve or disapprove of the subject."[3]

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[1] Refer to the Treatise, op. cit., pp. 161-162.

[2] Treatise, op. cit., p. 77.

[3] Ibid, p. 166.

Causality is an inference made by the "soul" which is prompted by a feeling on the basis of conjunction of events. A person observes events constantly occurring together. He is prompted by custom or habit to conclude that the two events are causally related. Further, he expects that in the future each occurrence of the initial event will be followed immediately by the second.

Finally, Hume must show that causality as previously explained can also be used to describe human actions. This he does with a discussion of liberty and necessity.

In assessing the world around them, people more often predict the actions of other people than of natural events. As is the custom with all judgments, regularities in events lead one to assume that the events are caused. The relationship between events which occur in sequence regularly one after the other is assumed to be a causal one.

The only alternative to causality is chance. Free will is opposed to necessity. Therefore, it must be equated with chance. If human actions were completely random, as this alternative must imply, prediction of human behavior would be impossible. If such were the case, society would disintegrate. But society obviously continues on the basis of the predictability of human actions. Therefore chance cannot be considered a factor in behavior.[1]

This view is summed up by Hume in the following quotation:

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[1] The concept of 'liberty' is discussed by Hume in the Treatise, op. cit., pp. 404-407.

"...the same course of reasoning will make us conclude, that there
is but one kind of necessity, as there is but one kind of cause, and
that the common distinction betwixt moral and physical necessity is
without any foundation in nature. This clearly appears from the
precedent explication of necessity. 'Tis the constant conjunction of
objects, along with the determination of the mind, which constitutes
a physical necessity: And the removal of these is the same thing with
chance. As objects must either be conjoin'd or not, and as the mind
must either be determin'd or not to pass from one object to another,
'tis impossible to admit of any medium betwixt chance and an absolute
necessity. In weakening this conjunction and determination you do not
change the nature of the necessity; since even in the operation of
bodies, these have different degrees of constancy and force, without
producing a different species of the relation."[1]

Thus, according to Hume, the same tools of analysis are equally available to

a study of the empirical world and human conduct.

SUMMARY

The foregoing provides the basis from which Hume can develop his moral

philosophy. He has explained the cause (although not in specific terms) of

human action. All action is stimulated by impressions. Reason does not

influence or direct human action. Reason merely discovers the relationship

between objects or sequences of events. This knowledge then becomes the means

whereby the passions are able to achieve their ends.

Secondly, Hume has demonstrated the necessary connection between

impressions and behavior. Now he need only uncover the principles which

determine the basis upon which man reacts to impressions. These principles

might be described as the ends or goals of human behavior. These principles

can then be shown to be the basis for moral judgments and the task is completed.

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[1] _Treatise_, op. cit., p. 171.

Chapter 1 was introduced with a quotation. It acts as a starting point and also serves as a summary of this section.

"...the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason."

Moral distinctions or any distinction which results in action cannot be founded on impressions earlier called sense data. Sensations of an external nature must become related to the passions before action can result. Reason is able to assess the situation and direct action so as to satisfy the passions. However, the goals of human action, both moral and otherwise, are determined by neither the external world nor the understanding.

Thus, Hume is able to eliminate two alternative theories which have been used to describe and explain human action. The first links all behavior to the empirical world. The second depends on subjugating all action to the direction of the reason. Neither, according to Hume, is an adequate explanation of human behavior.

EVALUATION

The interpretation of Hume developed in the preceding pages makes an important assumption, i.e. that Hume's theory of knowledge is an integral part of his theory of human conduct. The Treatise is devoted to an analysis of human conduct. Yet it begins with an analysis of the understanding. Part II and Part III of the Treatise are concerned with the "Passions" and "Morals." Further, the Treatise does not attempt to treat each of these subjects as distinct and unrelated. Hume is clearly interested in indicating the inter-relationship existing among the understanding, the

passions, and various moral principles. In this context moral philosophy can only be developed on a sound epistemological base.

The emphasis on the relationship of moral philosophy and the theory of knowledge has a long, if seldom recognized tradition. Plato first argued the point though in a reverse fashion. Throughout the early dialogues, Plato is concerned with moral problems. The various discussions with eminent sophists indicate Plato's desire to discover the basis of morality so as to dispel the shroud of doubt created by scepticism and various theories of moral relativism. Pleasure is discussed at length with Protagoras and is eventually discredited as the basis of morality by Plato in the Gorgias. Happiness becomes the aim of the good life. But happiness can be achieved only through knowledge of the "forms." The Symposium reinforces this view.

The Republic, however, is the key to Plato's moral philosophy. It points to Plato's inability to understand morality in any complete philosophical sense without a prior understanding of the basis of human knowledge. As a result, the dialogues which follow the Republic are concerned with epistemology to a very considerable extent. For the purpose of this thesis, the important lesson to be learned from the chronological progression of the dialogues is that a thorough understanding of the basis of human knowledge is essential to the development of a moral philosophy.

More recently, G. E. Moore approaches moral philosophy from a distinctly epistemological point of view. One's knowledge of values and one's knowledge

of facts are based on the same mechanisms. The difference is not the method used in achieving knowledge, but the nature of the objects of knowledge themselves. Of course, values and facts are different. However, the basis of their difference is not the various methods of proving the validity of our knowledge in each case but in the objects of knowledge themselves. Thus theory of knowledge becomes the method whereby G. E. Moore attempts to show the basis of morality and compare it with our knowledge of the empirical world.

The comparison of Hume's approach to the problem of moral philosophy with those of other eminent philosophers could be continued at some length. However, it is not the purpose of this paper to develop this aspect of the history of philosophy. Suffice it to say that Hume has considerable historical support for his approach to moral philosophy.

To call on historical support is not sufficient, regardless of the eminence of the philosophers concerned, to establish the validity of the progression of an argument. What is the importance of theory of knowledge to an understanding of the "fact-value" relationship? In any study of the empirical world, if we are to understand the basis of human knowledge, we must answer two questions:

1. How is knowledge obtained?

2. How do I know that this knowledge is valid, i.e. is an accurate representation of the empirical world?

The same two questions must be applied to our knowledge of values. Unless we know the basis of our knowledge of facts and values, how can we hope to understand the relationship between the two areas of knowledge?

Thus a thorough understanding of theory of knowledge is essential both to moral philosophy and to the understanding of the relationship between facts and values.

<center>II</center>

The second part of this evaluation could be referred to as an analysis of Hume's negative epistemology. Likewise the third part of the evaluation could be referred to as an evaluation of Hume's positive epistemology. In the Treatise this distinction may be somewhat artificial. This constitutes one of the fundamental differences between The Treatise and The Enquiries. Hume in the Treatise does not attempt to sort out the difference between his sceptical attack on previous philosophers and his more positive attempt to answer their problems. The difference is quite striking. While Hume is concentrating on attack, his work is very effectively destructive. However, he does not retain, in many cases, any of the valuable parts of the philosophies of those upon whom he turns his sceptical eye. Thus, in his more positive moments, Hume shows all too often that he has not learned from the mistakes of others and he proceeds to duplicate their errors.

Hume, the sceptic, is the man most frequently remembered. There are good reasons for this fact, since Hume, the sceptic, reveals many of the weaknesses of arguments and attitudes found frequently in preceding philosophers.

Although it is possible to discuss Hume's sceptical philosophy without specific reference to the rest of the Treatise, the real impact of this aspect
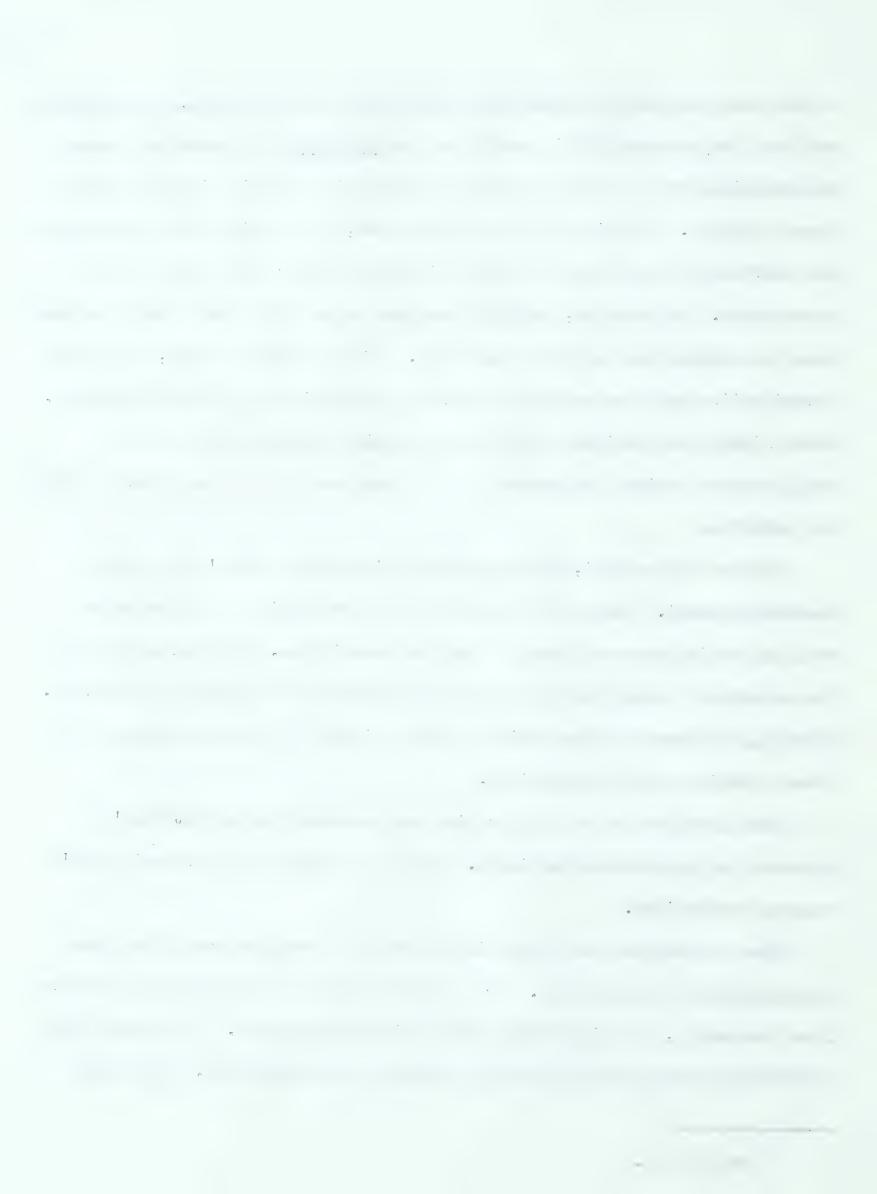
of his work can only be understood within this broader context. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this section of the _Treatise_ is to develop a sound philosophical basis for the extension of scientific inquiry into the area of human behavior. If this is to be accomplished, many of the assumptions which had previously been accepted must be discredited and a new point of view substituted. For example, many philosophers argued that moral standards were based on nonempirical a priori reasoning. If this were the case, scientific investigation would be unable to develop an understanding of moral behavior. Human liberty was another concept which required analysis before the application of scientific methods to an understanding of human behavior could be justified.

Within this context, the purpose and direction of Hume's philosophy becomes apparent. The role of reason in the acquisition of knowledge as well as its influence on behavior must be ascertained. The application of the concept of causal necessity must be broadened to include human behavior. Finally, the impact of the notion of human liberty on this new approach to human behavior must be understood.

The first section of this chapter was concerned to recount Hume's approach to the problems mentioned. The task at hand is to evaluate Hume's various conclusions.

Hume argues that the reason is incapable of creating meaningful ideas independently of impressions. It is capable only of arranging ideas received from the senses, and discovering their interrelationships. He argues first from analogy and secondly using the concept of contradiction.[1] The first

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[1] See page 13.

argument is sound, but limited in its application. The fact that in some cases we cannot apply a priori concepts is not to say that we never can. Although Hume does not develop a purely logical argument to prove his point, he does have the necessary equipment at hand. In his _Dialogues on Natural Religion_, Hume demonstrates the logical fallacy of the Ontological argument for God's existence. The argument which Kant used in his _Critique of Practical Reason_ develops this argument and denies that 'existence is a predicate or an attribute.' Thus, unlike the relationship between 'bachelors' and 'unmarried men,' existence cannot be determined solely through an examination of the meaning of words.

Had Hume used this argument, he could have proven without recourse to analogy that reason is unable to determine existence a priori and hence is incapable of widening our knowledge of the empirical world without recourse to the impressions. Hume does, however, make this point indirectly by calling on the concept of contradiction. Statements about the empirical world are not self contradictory if incorrect. A priori statements, at least those of the nature mentioned above, always are.

Regardless of the adequacy of the arguments used, Hume's conclusions appear to be correct. Knowledge gained from an analysis of meanings alone has limited application. It may yield valuable information concerning our language; it is unable to yield any information concerning the nature of the empirical world. All knowledge of the empirical world, Hume concludes, must result from impressions.

Hume's treatment of causal necessity follows directly from the conclusions concerning the power of reason. Causality is directly concerned with the empirical world. Therefore, reason cannot be used to demonstrate the validity of this concept as it applies to empirical phenomena. Consequently, causal necessity must be an idea derived from the impressions. But this conclusion too is inadequate, as the causal relationship cannot be traced to any specific impression. Thus the justification for the application of this concept to events in the world must be non-empirical and non-rational.

This attack on causal necessity would appear to undermine the entire scientific method. Hume's method of avoiding the apparent difficulties will be discussed in the next section of the evaluation. The present objective is to evaluate the negative aspects of Hume's epistemology. This can only be done by introducing the concept of human liberty.

Hume is concerned to argue against the possibility of human liberty. In so doing he concludes his sceptical arguments. Human behavior has all the characteristics of regularity and predictability which are found in other types of empirical phenomena. If human action were not caused by antecedent events, it would necessarily be random. We know from experience that human behavior is not random; thus human behavior, like all events in the empirical world, must be caused.

The important point here is not Hume's treatment of the concept of liberty; it is rather the position into which his arguments lead. A strict dichotomy between necessity and chance has been established. And this categorization allows Hume to argue that human behavior is either random

or necessary, i.e. caused. The position is summarized earlier in this chapter;[1] "there is but one kind of necessity, as there is but one kind of cause."[2] The major portion of the first two chapters of the Treatise has as its object the proof of this one conclusion.

In evaluating this aspect of Hume's philosophy, four conclusions become apparent:

1. In his discussion of human liberty, and through his demonstration of the impossibility of deriving the causal relationship from impressions, Hume is able to assume a strict dichotomy between necessity and chance which is essential to the further development of his moral philosophy. In the process, he has denied that there can be more than one type of necessary relationship. Thus in any further discussion of a necessary connection, Hume is able to assume that logical necessity can be equated with causal necessity. That is to say that the causal connection among physical phenomena is as strict and necessary as the logical connection between, for example, bachelors and unmarried men. Furthermore, any event which is not connected in this manner to preceding events must be random and therefore unexplainable. All events and occurrences must fall under one category or the other.

It is clear that this view greatly simplifies the task of the moral philosopher. In addition, it justifies a strict application of the scientific method to a far larger field of experience than was previously held to be

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[1] See pp. 15-18.

[2] Treatise, op. cit., p. 171.

possible. On the other hand, it leads to a great over-simplification of many phenomena, including human behavior. The results of this over-simplification will be seen in the following conclusions and throughout the rest of this thesis.

2. Hume has rendered unexplainable at least one important concept, i.e. causal necessity, and by implication many other important concepts. That is to say, the application of the concept of causality cannot be given rational or empirical justification. The reasons for this view have been explained at length previously. One is lead to question these conclusions when one realizes that most of our concepts used in explanation are neither analytic in nature nor strictly speaking empirical. Theories which describe the relationships among events are not gained from impressions, and they are certainly not analytic in nature. One cannot be said to see Newton's laws of motion. These laws are inferred. Hume tends to assume that the world lies before us all categorized and catalogued, waiting to be discovered.

Kant was the first to analyze seriously areas of knowledge which were neither directly attributable to impressions nor analytic in nature. He created a third category called synthetic a priori, which included the concept of causal necessity. This reference is useful for our purposes only because it points to an area which was not adequately dealt with by Hume. A similar sort of criticism will be made in the following section where the category of perceptions will be considered.

3. The third criticism can do little more than point a problem which is implied by Hume, the sceptic. This is the problem of induction and the role it plays in Hume's philosophy. MacIntyre suggests that Hume's attitude to induction is much more complex than appears in his more sceptical moments and is therefore liable to misinterpretation. This may be true. Yet it is certainly the case that the problems referred to above, and certainly Hume's attitude toward causality, are determined by the thesis that arguments are either deductive or defective. This is largely a result of the restrictions which Hume places on reason.

Hume's treatment of causality is an excellent example of his reluctance to discuss induction seriously. Causality cannot be deduced. That is to say the reason is unable to demonstrate the existence of the causal relationship. Further, causality is not an empirical phenomena. Therefore it cannot be scientifically or philosophically justified. No alternatives for justification exist. Induction is never considered a possibility.

I am inclined to paraphrase MacIntyre and say that our contemporary disapproval of Hume on induction makes our contemporary approval of what we take to be Hume on causality seem odd.[1] Considering the various implications of Hume's position on causality, one is inclined to wonder why his views on the subject have been considered seriously for such a period of time. To recapitulate, Hume's position on causality to be taken seriously requires that one accept a strict dichotomy between necessity and chance, and

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[1] MacIntyre, Philosophical Review, 1959, p. 455.

consequently agree that all occurrences be placed under one of these
two categories; that one accept the equating of causal and logical
necessity; and that one accept the rejection of the possibility of inductive
reasoning.

4. The fourth and final conclusion concerns the implications of Hume's
sceptical philosophy for ethics. One need only say that if Hume's conclusions
concerning the power of reason are accepted, it follows that a rationalistic
approach to ethics must be rejected. Moral values have to do with the
empirical phenomena of human behavior and hence cannot be derived by a
process of analytic reasoning. For the moment this conclusion will simply
be left as given. Its validity will be discussed at greater length in
future chapters.

III

The previous section has discussed the negative or sceptical aspects
of Hume's epistemology. However, Hume does spend considerable time
developing a positive epistemology, the purpose of which is to provide the
foundation for a theory of human conduct. Our evaluation of this aspect of
Hume's work will consider the concepts of perception, impressions, and
causality.

As indicated in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, Hume places
all ideas, sensations, emotions, and the like under the category of
'perception.' One of the most striking characteristics of this category
is the lack of comment and discussion which Hume gives to it. The category

plays no part in the sceptical sections of Hume's philosophy. However, it is a basic concept in the development of Hume's epistemology.

The first comment which should be made about the category of perception is its apparent all-inclusiveness. It would appear that all phenomena of which the mind is aware are perceptions. If this is the case, the category assumes no purpose or function. The primary purpose for specifying a category is to allow one to differentiate between those things which fall within the classification and those which fall without. To state it differently, by implication when a category is created one assumes the existence of a second category which includes those things not covered by the first one.

At first glance this does not seem to be a serious problem. However, if we are asked whether Hume is a phenomenologist the problem becomes apparent. Does Hume feel that there is an external world which could be said to cause our perceptions? Does Hume distinguish between our knowledge and the object of that knowledge?

If the above argument is correct, the existence of the category of perception in Hume's philosophy implies a second category, which might be called the subject and object of our perceptions; that is to say, a category which includes the object of our knowledge, as well as the cause of all our impressions. Such a category is alluded to by Hume in a passage quoted earlier.[1] In the quoted passage, Hume clearly suggests that a distinction must be made between perceptions and the objects which cause those perceptions.

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[1] See page 16.

If in fact Hume does recognize this distinction, and there are many indications that he does, we must ask, 'Exactly what is the relationship between these two categories?' On this point Hume makes no comment. Considering that Hume's immediate philosophical predecessor is Berkeley, it is difficult to understand why he ignores this central epistemological problem with which Berkeley was so concerned. Berkelian idealism was an obvious attempt to deal with the mind matter dichotomy and all that it entails. Yet at the basis of Hume's epistemology the dichotomy exists, although without any attempt to discuss the problems which it raises. It is doubtful that Hume can develop a viable epistemological theory without considering the relationship between the external world of objects and the world of perception.

The inadequacy of Hume's treatment of this problem is reflected in the discussion of impressions. Throughout the _Treatise_, the concept of impressions is used in two ways. Often it means the actual sensation which one has. However, it is also used to mean that which causes the sensation. This linguistic confusion allows Hume to slide over many problems, some of which have already been mentioned.

Probably the most serious problem has to do with the recognition and conceptualization of sensations. There appears to be an assumption throughout the _Treatise_ that sensations, or more accurately the external world, exist independently of the mind in catalogued and conceptualized form. That is to say, Hume does not feel that the mind plays a significant role in the differentiation and relating of objects or the recognition of qualities. As a specific instance, language is never thought of as influencing what a

person sees or feels. The impressions are a reflection of the external world and the ideas are a reflection of the impressions. The possibility of the process working in reverse is never considered at any length.

Recently, Wittgenstein has argued that language is a prerequisite to knowledge and plays an important role in determining what a person is able to know. The contemporary philosopher also has the advantage of extensive research by social scientists into the field of the relative influence of society and its various institutions on behavior and knowledge.

It would be unfair to suggest that Hume is completely unaware of these factors. Nevertheless, in the epistemological sections of the _Treatise_ very little attempt is made to investigate this aspect of the acquisition of knowledge. Had he done so, many of the conclusions concerning the nature of human conduct would never have been deduced.

The final concept with which we will deal in this section of the evaluation is causality. One of the anomalies arising from Hume's work is the wide spread conclusion that Hume has greatly altered or even rendered useless the concept of causal connection. In fact, the sceptical philosophy does not challenge the concept of causality at all. It merely questions the basis for accepting and applying it. In the process of destroying many previously held assumptions, Hume indirectly strengthens the concept itself.

The establishment of causal relationships is for Hume a prime function of science. The purpose of the _Treatise_ is to prove that this methodology can be applied with equal validity and success to human behavior. The primary objective in the early parts of the _Treatise_ is to show that the causal principle must be operative in human conduct just as it is operative in physical occurrences.

The arguments which are used to establish the conclusion that human behavior is amenable to scientific investigation have all been outlined. Reason and empirical observation are rejected as offering a justification for causal connection. Constant conjunction and a feeling prompted in part by custom are put in their place. Causality becomes a function of the perceptions of the individual and not of the external world in isolation from the human mind.

The important fact is that the justification for acceptance of the causal principle is a feeling which is its own justification. This removes both causality and all concepts which are applied because of a feeling from the arena of philosophical or scientific investigation. The concept of causality is valid and useful because its application is based on an emotion. Given the categorization carried out by Hume, the advantage of this argument is that it allows him to apply the causal principle to all events which follow a pattern. Human behavior is as predictable and regular as many physical occurrences. Therefore, it must be caused.

Two comments can be made in relation to Hume's conclusion. It indicates that the mechanisms of the mind at least in some cases play an important role in the interpretation of sensations. This would seem to offer a counter argument to the criticisms made concerning Hume's treatment of perceptions and impressions. However, the criticisms made at that time still hold. Hume does not utilize the approach used in the discussion of causality at the more basic epistemological levels discussed earlier. A full exploitation of the implications of Hume's discussion of causality awaited the work of Kant.

Secondly, one is inclined to feel that although Hume is on the right track, the justification of causality merely by reference to the emotions is inadequate. One is inclined to think that Hume has quietly ignored the rigorous scepticism which was previously applied to rival theories. Causality is a concept which Hume needs very badly to assist in his analysis of human behavior. However, the equating of causal and logical necessity as well as the method used to introduce the concept into his philosophy cannot be justified if one applies the standards which Hume himself has insisted upon in his own sceptical moments. On the other hand, his conclusions do allow Hume to continue in the development of a theory of human conduct.

IV

Hume is not specifically concerned with the fact-value relationship. Nevertheless, the Treatise insofar as it has been expounded, does throw light on the problem at hand. As indicated in the summary, Hume has discredited the rationalist approach to ethics. A priori reasoning has been analyzed and severely limited in scope. Without recourse to impressions, it is capable only of discovering the relationships among various ideas. It is unable to bridge the gulf between the world of ideas and the world of impressions.

Because of its limitations, reason cannot, a priori, pass judgments on the validity of our knowledge about the empirical world. The methodology of epistemology must reject a rationalist approach to the understanding of human knowledge. Values are similarly concerned with the world. The same

restrictions which apply to theory of knowledge must also apply to moral theory. Hume develops this argument in detail.[1]

If knowledge is not a function of the relationships between and among ideas alone, perhaps it can be understood through an analysis of impressions alone. This view is patently false on first investigation. The empirical world cannot be known at all until one comes into contact with it. And as Hume pointed out, impressions are immediately translated into ideas by the understanding. If an impression is not accompanied by an idea it cannot be said to have been translated into knowledge and hence cannot be investigated.

There is only one general view left to the theorist. Facts and values can only be understood as a relationship resulting from the interaction of impressions and ideas. The impressions supply the material, and the reason catalogues the material into consistent and understandable patterns. The result is knowledge. Values can only be understood if the same approach is used. As indicated above, values are not a creation of the reason nor do they exist somehow in the empirical world independently of human beings. A proper understanding of values can only occur when one studies ideas and impressions as they are related by the understanding.

If Hume's analysis is correct, the method used for developing an understanding of facts can also be used to develop an understanding of values. This fact alone would indicate a close relationship between facts and values. However, the relationship cannot be made explicit until a detailed study is actually carried out.

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[1] See page 14.
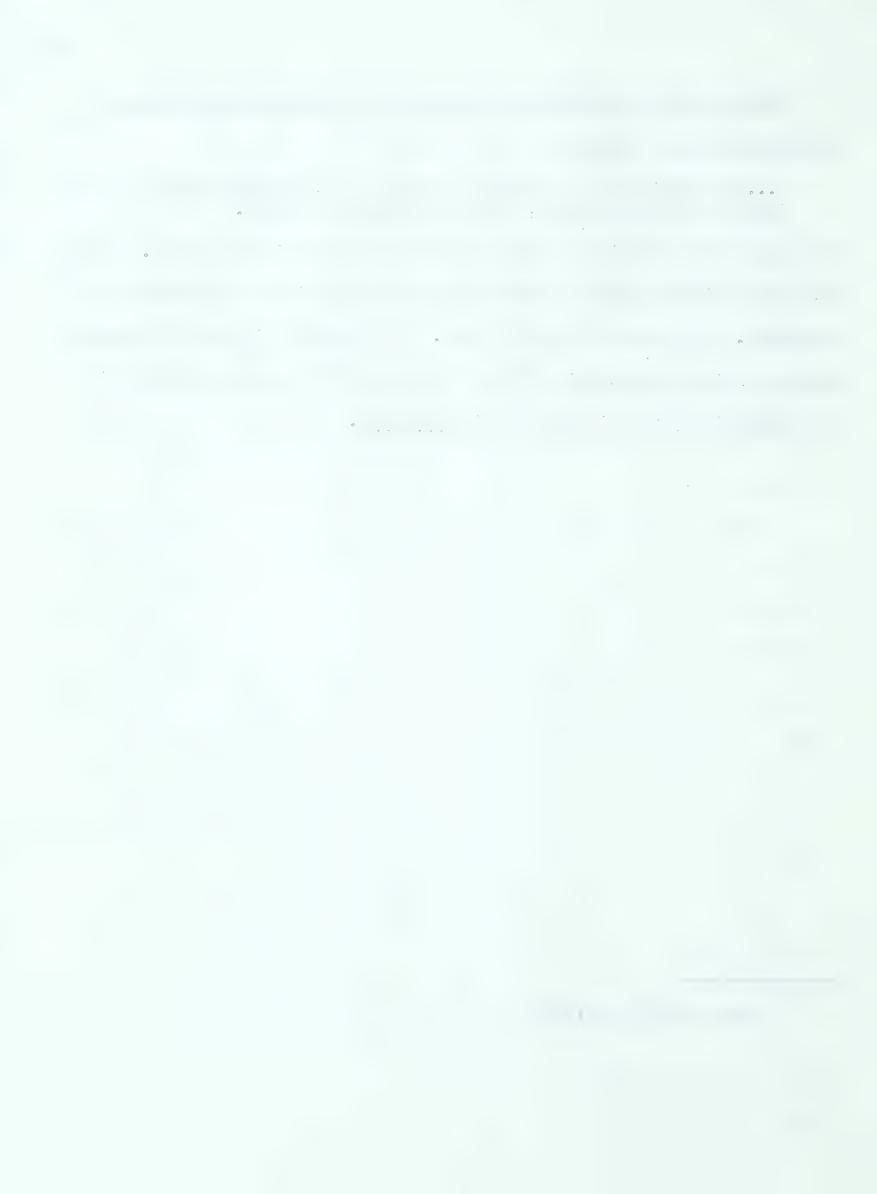
Finally, it is appropriate to refer to the quotation used at the beginning of this chapter.

"...the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceived by reason."[1]

Facts are not a function of the relations of objects in themselves. Reason must come into play before impressions can be said to be translated into knowledge. The same is true of values. The quotation is thus an adequate summary of the relationship of facts and values as Hume has developed it (by implication) to this stage in the Treatise.

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 489.

CHAPTER II: TWO PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN CONDUCT

Books I and II of the Treatise are primarily concerned to isolate the basic influences in human behavior and analyze each in their turn. The previous chapter was concerned with 'reason.' The part played by the external world was also considered, although in less detail. We concluded by saying that neither the reason nor the external world taken in themselves were the fundamental influence in human behavior. Perfect knowledge, be it analytic or synthetic, cannot lead to perfect behavior. The feelings are the important variable in human behavior, moral or otherwise.

Hume does not feel that by studying the various components of human behavior in isolation from each other he will discover the fundamental facts explaining conduct. However, he is concerned to understand the important aspects of each category before he attempts to discover how each category is related to the other two. With this in mind, it is necessary at this point to describe the nature of the emotions and the principles upon which they operate.

Hume does not place the emotions into a separate category. As indicated earlier, the basic categories are 'impressions' and 'ideas.' It is important to realize that Hume does not look on emotions as different in kind from sense data. Both are directly related to the real world in a way that ideas are not. Thus, both must be placed in the same category. On the other hand, it is clear that Hume assigns completely different roles to impressions, the origin of which is outside the body, and to those which originate from man himself, i.e. the emotions.

The emotions isolated from external impressions are not capable of causing action. They are initially aroused by contact with the external world. However, our reaction to external stimuli is not random. Hume is concerned to discover the principles which underlie and pattern man's response to various impressions. Some things are desired; others are avoided. Therefore we must ask "...in what manner do these impressions operate upon us."[1]

Hume recognizes that there are many distinct emotions which influence human behavior. His purpose is not to understand the characteristics of each emotion. This task he leaves to a more exhaustive psychology of human behavior. His purpose in every case is to discover that which all distinct emotions have in common. He is looking for the over-riding principle which reveals the structure of all emotional responses.

Hume concludes that all our responses are based on a desire for pleasure and an aversion to pain.

> "'Tis easy to observe, that the passions, both direct and indirect, are founded on pain and pleasure, and that in order to produce an affection of any kind, 'tis only requisite to present some good or evil. Upon the removal of pain and pleasure there immediately follows a removal of love and hatred, pride and humility, desire and aversion, and of most of our reflective or secondary impressions."[2]

Thus, the first principle necessary to an understanding of human behavior is that all goal-directed behavior is guided by the desire to increase pleasure and avoid pain.

Hume makes it quite clear that moral behavior is no exception to the general rule.

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 470.

[2] Ibid, p. 438.

"Now since the distinguishing impressions, by which moral good or
evil is known, are nothing but particular pains or pleasures; it
follows, that in all enquiries concerning these moral distinctions,
it will be sufficient to shew the principles, which make us feel
satisfaction or uneasiness from the survey of any character in order
to satisfy us why the character is laudable or blameable. An action,
or sentiment or character is virtuous or vicious; why? because its
view causes a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind. In
giving a reason for the pleasure or uneasiness, we sufficiently
explain the vice or virtue."[1]

Further,

"...We do not infer a character to be virtuous, because it pleases:
But in feeling that it pleases after such a particular manner, we in
effect feel that it is virtuous. The case is the same as in our
judgements concerning all kinds of beauty, and tastes, and sensations.
Our approbation is imply'd in the immediate pleasure they convey to
us."[2]

Thus, according to Hume, pain and pleasure have a fundamental place in any
description of human conduct.

However, the desire to avoid pain and increase pleasure must itself
be guided by some principle even more general and basic than emotions.
It is not sufficient to say merely that all men seek pleasure and avoid
pain. This drive is itself structured by some other principle "...upon
which all our notions of morals are founded."[3] It is Hume's belief that
man cannot live outside of society. This requirement leads to what Hume
considers to be the second fundamental principle of human behavior.

"The different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external
and internal; and these different stations arise necessarily, because
uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature.
Men cannot live without society, and cannot be associated without
government."[4]

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[1] Ibid, p. 471.

[2] Ibid, p. 471.

[3] Ibid, p. 473.

[4] Ibid, p. 402.

What motivates a man to act justly? Hume rejects the notion that justice results from a feeling of public benevolence.[1] He further rejects the notion that man is specifically motivated to act justly by some particular instinct or feeling.[2] According to Hume, there is no special psychological explanation which accounts for the general respect for justice. Why, then, are the rules of justice established?

Human life depends on the acquisition of goods which offer shelter from the elements and provide nourishment. Society is the tool which allows man to satisfy his basic needs. If we define property as that which one needs to maintain life or satisfy the passions, the acquisition of property becomes the reason for the existence of society. The chief impediment to the maintenance of society is the instability of the means of acquisition of property. Thus, conventions are established which govern man's behavior so as to protect the stability of those things which men group together to produce.

The rules of society are conventions established by mutual agreement to ensure the stability of social relationships which are required if basic human needs are to be met. Social living cannot occur without justice. The result is a development which is artificial in nature and which is called "a sense of common interest." The continuance of human life depends on the recognition of the common interests of all, created by the need for communal living.

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[1] Ibid, p. 482.

[2] Ibid, p. 483.

Hume asks a second question about society. Why does man attribute moral worth to these rules? This question will be discussed in detail in Chapter III. However, it is instructive to note that the question implies that morality is an outgrowth, or a result, of social living.

Hume draws three conclusions from the discussion of justice:[1]

1. Justice does not derive from an altruistic trait found in all men. To the contrary, it results from the common need of all men to group together for mutual support and protection.

2. Justice and the observance of justice are not founded on reason.

3. "Those impressions which give rise to this sense of justice are not natural to the mind of man, but arise from artifice and human conventions."[2] These points summarize what Hume considers to be the source of and principles underlying social behavior.

In tracing Hume's argument a number of important points have been made. Actions are not caused by or directly influenced by the reason. In addition, human actions are not random but are caused by impressions. These impressions, both sense data and emotions, result in action which can be understood in terms of two principles; the goal of all behavior is to achieve pleasure or avoid pain; human life is possible only within a social context.

Hume has developed an argument connecting the external world and reason to human behavior. He has also described the relationship between human behavior and society. The task which remains is to describe the relationship between human nature and moral judgments.

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[1] Refer to Hume, op. cit., pp. 495-496.

[2] Ibid, p. 496.

EVALUATION

The evaluation will not concern itself with how Hume ties all his various principles together. This will be the task of Chapter III. We will concern ourselves with an analysis of the role of pain and pleasure in human behavior. Is Hume's description of the role of pain and pleasure in human behavior justified? The concept of 'Justice' must be evaluated on the same basis. Finally we will be concerned to show how all this bears on the fact-value relationship.

The 'pleasure principle' has been used by many philosophers as a basis for developing a moral theory. It has many virtues. Superficially, at least, it is true. As a fact about human nature, it apparently allows the philosopher to close the gap between facts and values by basing all values on an empirical foundation.

It is important to note that Hume does not base his theory of human conduct solely on this psychological principle. The explanation of social behavior does not rely entirely on a universal desire for pleasure. However, it is still the case that Hume considers the drive toward pleasure as the primary motivating force in human behavior.

Is it really the case that all human behavior is motivated by a desire for pleasure? Hume states that this fact is obvious.[1] It is certainly true that people do occupy themselves with pleasurable activities. A swim in a cool lake on a hot day would probably fall into this category. On the other hand, pleasure for its own sake is not an obvious goal of all activities.

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[1] See Hume, op. cit., p. 438.

The man who works double shifts to pay the medical bills for his wife's operation is not engaging in a pleasurable activity, at least on first glance. Well, the answer comes back; directly he is motivated by a desire to see his wife in good health, but indirectly a healthy wife gives him pleasure. This could be true.

But we can think up more difficult examples. For example, is pleasure, either directly or indirectly, the motivation of the man who risks drowning to save a floundering swimmer? Perhaps he anticipates the fame which his heroic act will bring him. But did his split-second decision really take into account the pleasure of fame as opposed to the fear of death by drowning which at the time was of more immediate concern to him? Perhaps our protagonist can wiggle his way out of this question with a reasonably persuasive answer.

Eventually, however, we will force our opponent to reply (and everyone who has discussed the problem with a confirmed believer in the 'pleasure principle' has heard this line) to the effect that he <u>must</u> have been motivated by pleasure; what other reason could he have besides self-interest? Now our opponent is trapped. Why <u>must</u> man be motivated by a desire for pleasure? Because all men are selfish by nature! There can be no other reason but pleasure. Thus by definition all men are motivated by a desire for pleasure. And that is the trap.

If the only explanation for every human action is pleasure, then the principle is trivially true or meaningless. The principle is trivially true if our opponent can be forced to say that by definition everyone seeks pleasure. On these grounds the principle turns into tautology; and Hume

has agreed that a priori reasoning can tell us nothing instructive about the empirical world. On the other hand, perhaps the protagonist is unwilling to accept this verdict and refuses to admit that his principle is a matter of definition. The attack will then take the form of presenting counter examples. But every possible human action we can present will be analyzed in terms of pleasure. If he admits that it is theoretically possible to act on grounds other than desire for pleasure an example of someone acting in this manner can be presented. Therefore his only defense is to refuse to accept any counter example at all, at which point the category becomes meaningless.

An analogous situation would occur if someone said that everyone looks at the world through invisible rose-coloured glasses. We might attempt to present counter examples. However, each time an explanation would be given to explain away our counter example. Finally we are in a position to say that if everything falls into this category it is not a category at all, in which case the category loses its meaning because it has no conceivable value or use. It tells nothing about the world.

This line of reasoning is equally devastating when used against the principle which states that all men are always motivated by self-interest. If the view is held consistently, it can logically be pushed to the point where it becomes either meaningless or tautological.

Can the above argument be brought to bear against Hume's position? The answer is both yes and no. On one interpretation, Hume is suggesting that the pleasure principle is not the fundamental principle of human conduct. Man's need for society is more basic. The rules determining social behavior

thus become more fundamental than the desire for pleasure. On the other hand, there are many specific references in the _Treatise_ which could be used to defend the view that Hume felt that pleasure was the basic drive behind human conduct. The only accurate answer to this point is that Hume does not make himself explicit on the question of the over-riding principle determining human conduct.

Let us assume for the moment that Hume does feel that there are cases where society itself creates a motivation which cannot be explained by reference to the 'pleasure principle.' Is Hume's emphasis on pleasure as one of two basic motivational factors justified? Once again, I think that the answer must be no. Hume has confused a specific cause with a general theory. The result is a philosophical error.

In fact, Hume has asked an improper question and has ended with an equally improper answer. An analogy may serve to introduce the problem which is inherent in Hume's treatment of pleasure. One of the most recurrent arguments for the existence of God is known as the teleological argument. Aristotle used this argument to defend the existence of a "final cause." Put crudely, the argument develops in the following fashion. Every event has a cause. And that cause was itself caused. The regression continues until we reach the point where we wish to say that there must be a first cause which started the whole series going. Usually this first cause is labelled "God."

The same mentality leads people to posit the pleasure principle or some similar alternative. They suggest that there must be some basic cause

of all human actions which is final. Once the action is traced back to this cause no further explanation is necessary or possible.

There are some very serious problems attached to this mode of explanation. The first is the thesis that there must be some final cause which ends the series and which does not require a causal explanation to account for its own existence. The proof for the logical necessity of a teleological explanation is of dubious validity on the more general level where it is usually employed. I have never seen a proof which claims to demonstrate the logical necessity for a similar final cause on the level of human behavior.

Hume would be the first to deny the possibility of demonstrating the logical necessity for the existence of a 'first' cause on the level of human behavior; yet the whole direction of his theory of human conduct assumes that there must be some basic or primary motivation by reference to which all other emotions and all actions can be explained. Hume's insistence on the inability of reasoning to establish empirical truths a priori is fundamental to his entire philosophy. The emphasis on pleasure as one of the two fundamental factors in human behavior is equally important to the development of his philosophy in the Treatise. Yet these two aspects of Hume's philosophy are incompatible, thus revealing a basic inconsistency of which this is but one example.

The second problem which arises has to do with Hume's treatment of the dual concepts of pleasure and pain. Thus far the notion of pain has not been discussed. This might seem peculiar, as 'pain' is mentioned at least as frequently as pleasure in the Treatise. The treatment is justified,

however, when one realizes that Hume considers pleasure and pain to be on a continuum. That is to say, pain is considered to be merely a negative quantity of pleasure. It is this view of the relationship of these two notions which leads Hume to many erroneous conclusions.

In no sense can pleasure and pain be placed on a continuum. One can be in a state of pain; one cannot be in a state of pleasure. In fact, there is no general state of pleasure which one can achieve. Pleasure derived from physical activity is not the same as pleasure derived from listening to a concert. Hume realizes this implicitly when he suggests that there are different kinds of pleasure.[1] However, when he is seeking a basic motivational force in human behavior, Hume clearly assumes that all actions are aimed at achieving a state of pleasure which in every case is similar, if not in quantity, at least in quality.[2] It is because of this assumption that Hume is able to speak of pleasure as the specific cause of human action.[3]

This leads us to the third and final point on this subject. Without acknowledging any change in meaning, Hume uses the notion of pleasure on two distinct conceptual levels. In Book Three, particularly when the concept of justice is considered as an important determining force in human behavior, pleasure is referred to as a specific cause.[4] All actions are motivated by a desire for pleasure and an aversion to pain. However, the general

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[1] Hume, op. cit., pp. 472-473.

[2] Refer to Hume, op. cit., p. 438.

[3] Ibid, p. 438.

[4] Ibid, p. 472-473.

structure which determines the various paths available in achieving this basic goal is defined by society. Therefore, pleasure is a specific cause which operates within the theoretical framework provided by society. In describing human action Hume thus considers the important principles to be determined by an analysis of the social structure.[1]

On the other hand, Hume also treats the concept of pleasure, not as a specific cause which can only be understood within a wider theoretical framework, but as a general theory which provides the theoretical framework within which society is but one causal force. For example, one theoretical structure within which physical occurrences might be explained is all forces tend toward a state of equilibrium. Similarly, in this context Hume would say all actions tend toward a state of pleasure. Thus pleasure is not considered a specific cause, but a general law descriptive of all behavior.

Hume uses the concept of pleasure in both ways. Pleasure becomes both a specific cause and a general theory at the same time. Herein lies the fallacy. The meaning of the concept clearly changes depending on the context within which it is used. Yet Hume fails to recognize the changes which do occur as he shifts from one theory to the other. Thus in the second book Hume is able to consider the desire for pleasure to be the primary principle of human conduct, while in the third book the need for justice becomes the basic principle describing conduct. Because the change in usage is not recognized, Hume is able to consider the theoretical descriptions of the third book to be only a development of, as opposed to a fundamental change in, the ideas described in the second book.

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[1] Ibid, p. 473.

The arguments developed above have two purposes. Initially, we were concerned to show that the concept of pleasure cannot be used as a general explanation of all behavior. Consequently, it cannot provide the factual basis for a description of moral values. Secondly, it has been argued that although Hume does not use the concept of pleasure in the manner described above, nevertheless, the theoretical position which he develops using this concept is inconsistent.

The second principle which Hume develops is based on the concept of justice. Man cannot live outside of society. The arguments brought to bear against the notion of pleasure are not valid in this context. This principle is not a specific fact, but a general rule of human conduct. On the other hand, it can be inferred from many specific facts about human existence. Hume does in fact derive his rule from specific facts about human behavior.

This second principle upon which Hume bases his theory of human conduct is to my mind valid and significant. He is one of the first philosophers to place behavior in a specifically social context. In addition he is one of the first to suggest that values cannot be understood without considering them as a result in some sense of the necessity of social living. The third chapter will deal with the specific relationship between values and society. At that juncture comment will be made on the value of the theory for understanding the fact-value relationship.

How does this chapter reflect on our understanding of the fact-value relationship? If the arguments presented are valid, values cannot be shown to be based on psychological facts such as the drive for pleasure. The chapter has, however, revealed what Hume considers to be the four factors which are involved in human conduct, namely, the external world, i.e. sense data, psychological motivation, i.e. the emotions, the reason, and finally society. It still remains to be shown how these four factors combine to produce both facts and values.

CHAPTER III: THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUME'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY

"...no action can be virtuous, or morally good, unless there be in human nature some motive to produce it, distinct from the sense of its morality."[1]

The section of The Treatise which deals with morality is undoubtedly the most important yet the most opaque portion of the book. It is important because Hume is here concerned to tie all the theories expounded earlier into a consistent philosophy of human conduct. As mentioned earlier, the first two books of The Treatise are written only to provide a foundation for moral philosophy. Hume throughout his work has developed a number of important principles, all of which have a bearing on human conduct. However, each principle has been developed from one category of thought only. As a result, Hume must show how these principles fit together to form a coherent whole.

The quotation at the beginning of this chapter is valuable because it emphasizes the fact that Hume is not developing a moral philosophy distinct from his previous work. Regardless of what morality is in itself, it derives its importance from its direct relationship to basic principles of human nature. Morality emerges from human behavior; it does not precede it.

All this is well and good; but from what specifically does morality derive? As is his wont, Hume is first careful to indicate what cannot be the source of morality. Although somewhat repetitious, it will be valuable to re-emphasize this area of Hume's philosophy. Following this, an attempt will be made to describe in some detail Hume's exposition concerning the basis of morality from a positive point of view.

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 479.

Hume has made two points about our knowledge of the external world which bear repeating. The only facts which a priori reasoning can produce concern the relationships between and among ideas. This sort of knowledge can tell us nothing new about the external world. The second type of knowledge is derived from impressions and concerns objects as they are related to other objects and to the knower.

Neither of the above two types of knowledge can lead one to an understanding of morality. Hume comments in the following words:

> "If the thought and understanding were alone capable of fixing the boundaries of right and wrong, the character of virtuous and vicious either must lie in some relations of objects, or must be a matter of fact, which is discovered by our reasoning. This consequence is evident. As the operations of human understanding divide themselves into two kinds, the comparing of ideas, and the inferring of matters of fact; it must be an object of one of these operations, nor is there any third operation of the understanding, which can discover it."[1]

Further,
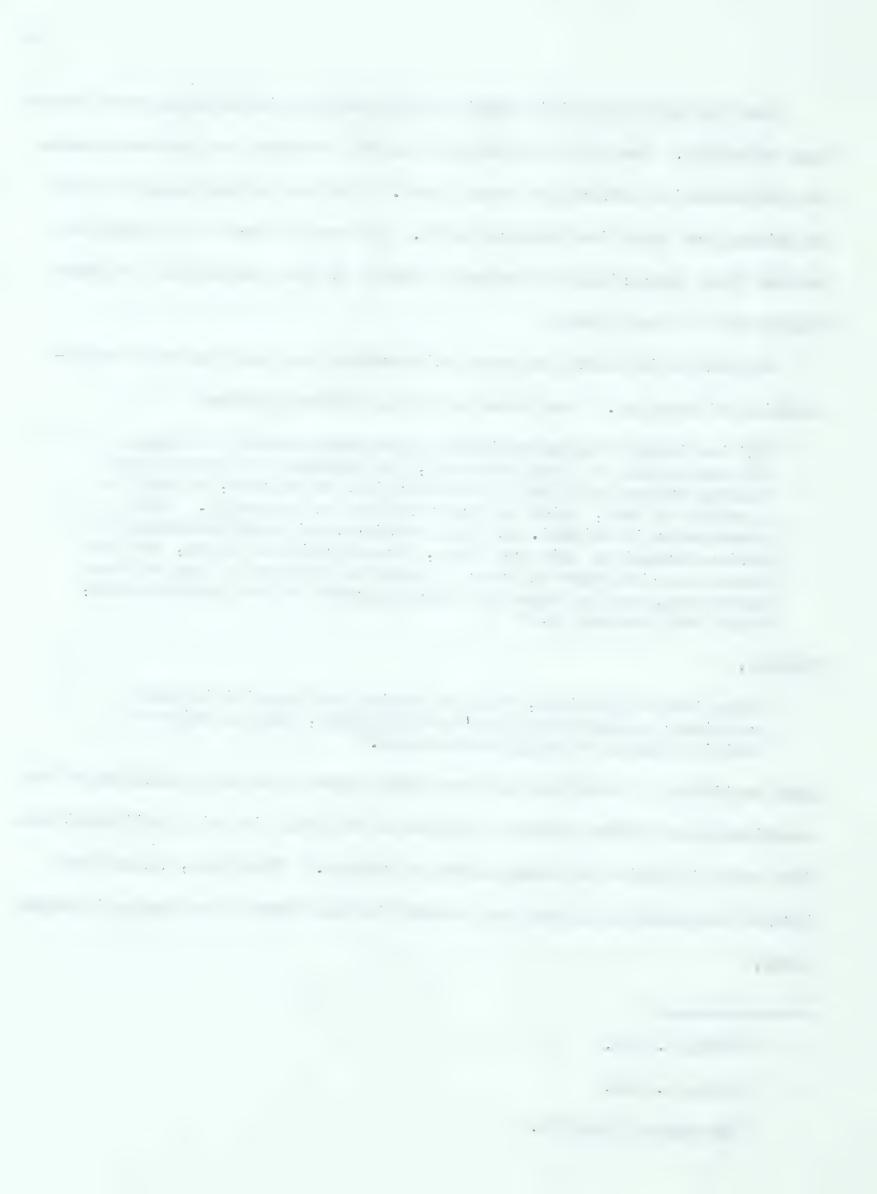
> "Upon this supposition, vice and virtue must consist in some relations; since it is allow'd on all hands, that no matter of fact is capable of being demonstrated."[2]

Hume continues by defending his previously stated view that knowledge of the relations among either ideas or objects in the world is not a sufficient base from which to derive an understanding of values.[3] Therefore, values must involve the passions as they are related to both types of knowledge indicated above.

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[1] Ibid, p. 463.

[2] Ibid, p. 463.

[3] See pages 14 and 15.

What, then, is the basis for moral distinctions? This is obviously a key question. Hume, however, never does give us one explicit answer to this question. At various times in Book III of The Treatise he offers an answer. However, the answer varies depending on the specific subject under consideration. In the following pages an attempt will be made to offer a coherent account of Hume's position. A criticism will follow which will indicate the implicit contradictions built into Hume's main premises. It will be my contention that Hume's position is confused because of the inconsistencies implicit in his theory of conduct, some of which have been already discussed.

Hume begins by basing morality on the notion of pleasure.

"The approbation of moral qualities most certainly is not deriv'd from reason, or any comparison of ideas; but proceeds entirely from a moral taste, and from certain sentiments of pleasure or disgust, which arise upon the contemplation and view of particular qualities or characters."[1]

Morality according to Hume is based on feelings and those feelings in turn are a function of pleasure and pain. "An action or sentiment, or character is virtuous or vicious; why? because its view causes a pleasure or uneasiness of a particular kind."[2]

Obviously, this definition of morality is insufficient. To begin with, all moral judgments become completely dependent upon the feeling of a person at the time the action occurs. Unless each person's emotional reaction to every event was identical with the feelings of every other person, consensus of opinion would be impossible. Morality then becomes relative to the point that it loses all meaning and usefulness. The second problem, one which is

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 581.

[2] Ibid, p. 471.

not satisfactorily solved to my mind, occurs when one asks how Hume is able on his theory to distinguish moral and non-moral feelings. As all actions are caused by a desire for pleasure, on what basis do we apply moral judgments?

Hume recognizes the problems raised by the first question immediately. His answer is scattered throughout the third book of The Treatise. He comments:

> "Tis only when a character is considered in general, without reference to our particular interest, that it causes such a feeling or sentiment as denominates it as morally good or evil."[1]

There is some suggestion that Hume considers that this sort of answer also satisfies the second question posed above. However, before this can be determined, it is necessary to discuss this "general" perspective which allows one to assign moral value to human conduct. Hume must call upon some principle which is not connected to the notion of pleasure and which will allow him to establish a picture which permits each individual to develop an objective or "general" view of the conduct of himself and others.

> "Tis necessary therefore, to abridge these primary impulses, and find some more general principles, upon which all our notions of morals are founded."[2]

Hume feels that the concept of justice provides the principle needed to bridge the gap between "those primary impulses" and the "more general principles."[3]

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[1] Ibid, p. 472.

[2] Ibid, p. 473.

[3] Ibid, p. 473.

Chapter II contained a discussion of justice and the place of society in understanding human conduct. However, we did not consider the relationship of morality to justice. Thus we must ask "why we annex the idea of virtue to justice, and of vice to injustice."[1]

As indicated earlier,[2] communal living is a necessary part of human existence. In order to satisfy his wants, man requires the help of others. "Thus self-interest is the original motive to the establishment of justice."[3] However, as society grows and becomes more complex, the individual tends to lose sight of the immediate benefits of social living. The advantages of co-operation and regard for others are obscured. At the same time the selfish desire for pleasure remains strong. The individual tends to forget the long range pleasures and is willing to ignore the rules of communal living for his own immediate gain. To maintain the stability of society, some force is required which will remind all persons of the advantages of abiding by the conventions of the social order.

The value of the maintenance of justice is continually renewed by feelings of sympathy. In this regard Hume suggests that "a sympathy with public interest is the source of the moral approbations which attend that virtue."[4] When someone commits an injustice, our sense of compassion or sympathy is aroused. We recognize the harm created by anyone who ignores

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[1] Ibid, p. 498.

[2] See Chapter II.

[3] Hume, op. cit., p. 499.

[4] Ibid, p. 500.

socially necessary rules of behavior. Thus with every injustice with which we come into contact, the need for justice is re-emphasized.

Sympathy is accompanied by a feeling of uneasiness which in turn is akin to pain. An action which arouses a positive feeling of sympathy creates a feeling of satisfaction which is akin to pleasure. Thus Hume is able to tie the fundamental emotional motivation very closely to the sense of morality created by social living. His position is concisely stated by the following quotation:

> "The whole scheme, however, of law and justice is advantageous to the society; and 'twas with a view to this advantage, that men, by their voluntary conventions, established it. After it is once establish'd by these conventions, it is naturally attended with a strong sentiment of morals; which can proceed from nothing but our sympathy with the interests of society. We need no other explication of that esteem, which attends such of the natural virtues, as have a tendency to the public good."[1]
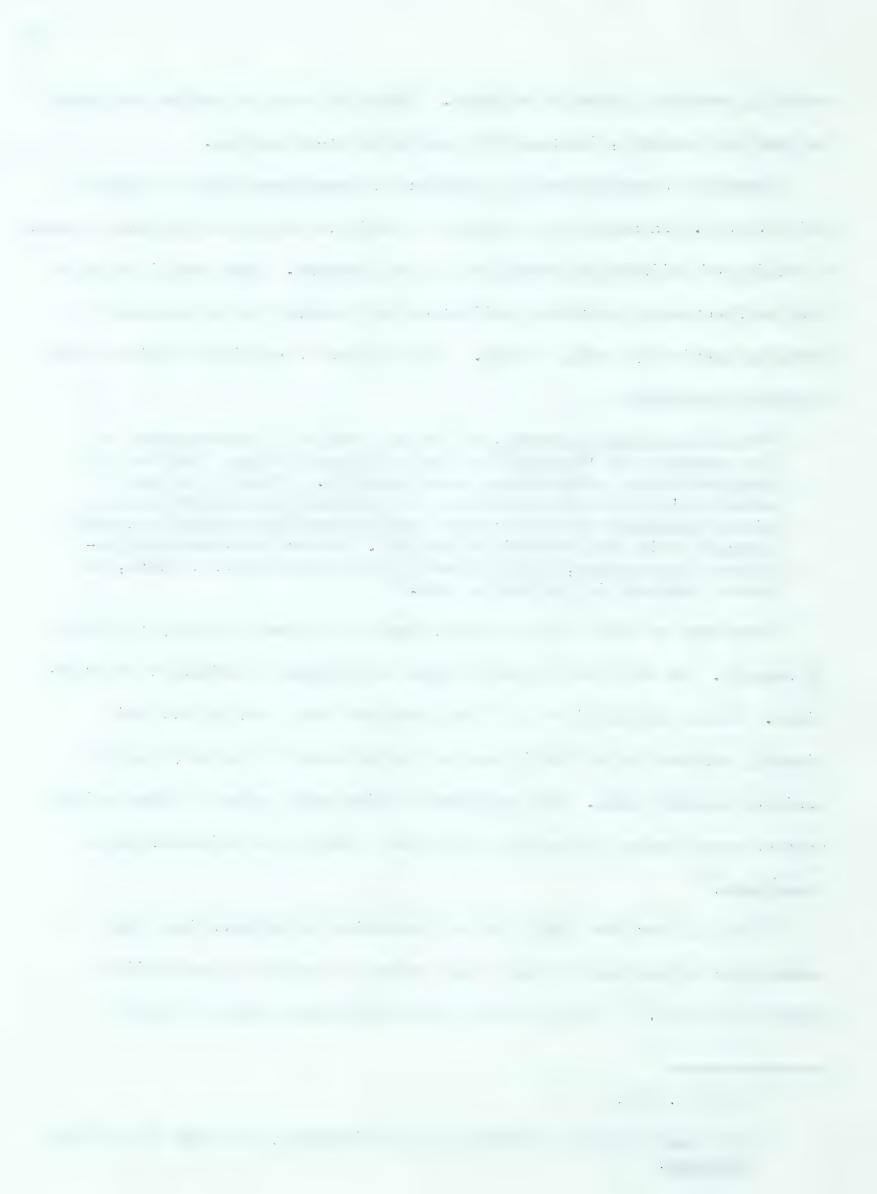
Hume does not feel that the development of values is purely a function of society. He explains at great length the origins of natural virtues and vices. It is sufficient to say that Hume does feel that actions not directly related to the "artifices and contrivances" of society can be assigned a moral value. The assessment of the moral value of these actions depends upon whether the action stimulates a feeling of satisfaction or uneasiness.[2]

Finally, Hume does imply in his discussion on promises that the conventions established by the social order are capable of motivating a person to action.[3] That is to say, in certain cases where a rule or

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[1] Ibid, p. 580.

[2] For Hume's detailed defense of this statement, see page 574 of the Treatise.

[3] See also Treatise, p. 522.

custom has been established for purely social reasons, the situation itself, without recourse to reinforcement by the emotions, is capable of causing action.

If the interpretation just concluded is accurate, it is possible to ascribe three distinct definitions of morality to Hume. The first definition ties morality directly to the psychological and one might add selfish or self-interested principle of pleasure. The one distinctive feature of the pain and pleasure which arouses moral feeling is that it must be directly related to oneself or some other person.[1] The second definition could be said to be at the opposite extreme. It rejects the suggestion that morality is a function of one's personal feelings. Morality arises from man's social context. It is not based on pleasure or pain because it often demands action which is opposed to the well being of one or more persons involved. Morality is created by social living and derives its validity solely from the social context.[2] Finally, Hume suggests what amounts to a compromise definition. Morality is that which would arouse feelings of satisfaction or uneasiness in a completely disinterested or objective person who under-stands the necessity of social customs upon which the stability of society and therefore the welfare of the individual is dependent.[3]

Any moral philosophy must answer adequately a number of questions, the most important of which follow. Does the system adequately account for the common distinction between moral and morally indifferent actions?

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[1] See Hume, op. cit., p. 574.

[2] Ibid, p. 493 and Section V, Part II beginning p. 516.

[3] Ibid, p. 618.

If so, what is the basis of moral distinctions? In the evaluation which is to follow, it will be argued that Hume answers neither of these questions satisfactorily.

Throughout the exposition of Hume's philosophy, great emphasis has been placed on Hume's objections to a rationalistic theory of ethics. The emphasis is justified, in my opinion, and in fact runs throughout the Treatise. Nevertheless, Hume does leave room for the reason in practical moral judgments. For the most part the positive role of reason is implied rather than directly stated.[1] Any analysis of this aspect of his philosophy must by necessity be largely interpretive in nature. However, it is implicitly clear that Hume does rely heavily on man's ability to make rational judgments, judgments which are invariably involved in human conduct and particularly in morality. It is also true that the extent of reason's influence is largely dependent on the interpretation of Hume's moral philosophy which one is willing to accept. Nevertheless, it is possible to indicate the place of reason in moral judgments. This is a task which must now be undertaken.

The reason is involved in moral judgments in three distinct ways. Reason judges the situation caused by the interaction of the individual and the external world and decides upon the method most able to satisfy the demands of the passions concerned. Secondly, reason evaluates the success with which one achieves the goals indicated by the passions. Thirdly, reason determines the social framework within which morally justified action must

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[1] For an explicit statement of the place of reason in moral decisions, see Hume, op. cit., p. 493.

occur.

The role of reason in determining the method best suited to achieve the goals of the passions is caused by the intriguing duality of ideas and impressions. Human action can only be caused by impressions. However it is the role of the understanding to decipher the impressions and indicate the best method of achieving the goals demanded by the emotions. Because of the apparent duality, Hume is able to point to a causal chain of events yet allow a large degree of judgment. Judgment itself implies alternatives. And alternatives imply that choices are available to reason as it directs the conduct of the individual.

Reason also plays an important role in assessing the success or failure of each action in achieving the goals set out by the passions. The two basic emotions of pain and pleasure provide the standards against which the success of any action can be evaluated. The differentiation of pain and pleasure imply a gradient. In addition, one does not merely attain pleasure; one achieves varying degrees of pleasure. Likewise, one does not merely avoid pain; one avoids pain to varying degrees and with varying success. Furthermore, the understanding is in a position to distinguish various types of pleasure such as moral, carnal, and artistic. Reason must analyze all the possibilities and guide one's actions toward the end of greatest satisfaction. This in turn implies that reason must assess the success or failure of each action in achieving the goals indicated by the passions.

The area of greatest discernment for the understanding involves the societal involvements of the individual. Hume makes it clear that he

considers the social regulations placed on behavior to be artificial in nature and hence a contrivance of man's own mind.[1] Reason must assess the requirements of social living and ensure that behavior remains within the framework of conventions established by society.

And finally, to tie these judgments directly to Hume's moral philosophy, the opening quotation of the chapter points out that Hume does not consider morality to be a cause of human behavior. Morality is essentially a judgment. The motivations which result in action are prior to moral judgments. Morality is essentially a judgment which emerges on the basis of the degree of success or failure of human behavior to achieve the goals determined by the principles set out above. Interpreted in this way, morality is a product of the reason.

EVALUATION

Much time could be spent in attempting to decipher all the intricacies of Hume's moral philosophy. However, I doubt that any amount of interpretation could arrive at a consistent theory. Hume's approach is based on an attempt to discover a relatively small number of principles of human behavior. These principles are generally briefly stated. The largest portion of the Treatise is concerned to defend these basic ideas and develop a consistent theory which draws them together. This section of the thesis is devoted to an assessment of Hume's success in so doing.[2]

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[1] See Hume, op. cit., Part II, Section I, beginning p. 477.

[2] It should be noted that the structure of this evaluation parallels the structure of the first half of the chapter.

The chapter begins with a description of those areas of knowledge which are not, in Hume's opinion, basic to an understanding of morality. Knowledge of values cannot be gained from an analysis of the relationship existing among ideas; further, knowledge of the relations among objects not directly related to the individual will not yield an understanding of values.

Hume is making a valid point. Values do not exist independently of the individual, suspended in the physical world. Furthermore, values cannot be ascribed to a metaphysical world and thus be discoverable only by the reason. Values arise as a result of the very practical attempts by human beings to acquire the necessities of life. This process requires inter-action not only with the physical world, but also with the social world. It is because man is not self-sufficient that an ethical system becomes necessary.

The important observation which Hume is making is that to understand morality one must look at the basic motivations of each person as he is affected by interaction with other people in the daily process of living.

Hume occasionally suggests that the process of acquiring factual knowledge is intrinsically different from the process of acquiring knowledge of values. Empirical knowledge is gained only through an understanding of the relationships between and among objects themselves. These relationships are merely reflected by our ideas. On the other hand, when Hume is at his phenomenological best he recognizes the important influence of the emotions and society on what we assimilate as knowledge.

"Human nature being compos'd of two principal parts, which are
requisite in all its actions, the affections and understanding;
'tis certain, that the blind motions of the former, without the
direction of the latter, incapacitate men for society."[1]

"...'tis very usual with the latter (i.e. natural philosophers)
to consider any motion as compounded and consisting of two parts
separate from each other, tho' at the same time they acknowledge
it to be in itself uncompounded and inseparable."[2]

Any action taken by an individual, be it acquiring or applying knowledge,
must be first motivated by the affections. What we know is to a large
degree dependent on what we want to know and on what our society considers
to be important.

Hume would find a great deal of support for this view in today's
world. Sociology, psychology, and other social sciences are emphasizing
the influence of society and our emotions in defining the areas of knowledge.
Wittgenstein and his followers support this view with their theory that a
word derives its meaning from its use.

The object of this extended exercise is to argue that knowledge of
facts and knowledge of values are not different in kind but in degree. Thus
the theory of knowledge of facts and the theory of knowledge of values (moral
theory) will utilize the same methods of analysis and be based on the same
traits of human nature. The objects of that knowledge, however, will differ.

One of the basic principles, if not the basic principle, of Hume's
moral theory revolves around pleasure and pain. It will be assumed for

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 493.

[2] Ibid, p. 493.

the time being that the first definition for morality offered earlier[1] is
the correct one. Does this principle provide a basis which allows us to
account for the difference between moral and non-moral events? Hume
recognizes moral judgments as meaningful and important. However, it is
my contention that Hume must move outside of the pain-pleasure category to
account for moral judgments.

All actions are motivated by a desire for pleasure. But not all
actions are judged by moral standards. For example, my desire to go
fishing and the subsequent action of throwing a line into a pond do not
usually come under the category of morality. What is the basis of
differentiation? If some pursuits are more valuable than others, and Hume
certainly agrees that they are, some standard other than pleasure must be
used as the basis for the distinction.

This criticism is directly related to the discussion of pleasure and
pain in the previous chapter. The concept of pleasure is not capable of
accounting for the practical distinctions made by each individual every
day. If Hume is to adequately explain the distinctions made between moral
behavior, artistic endeavours or just pleasurable activity, he must look for
some principle other than pleasure upon which to base his theory.

Hume obviously does make the sort of distinctions mentioned above. He
talks at length about various types of pleasures and the desirability of
each. In the case of morality, Hume suggests that valid moral judgments
can be made only if one assumes a disinterested attitude. But this implies

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[1] Refer to page 59.

that the judgment must be made on grounds other than one's desire to achieve pleasure. Once his own pleasure is involved the individual is motivated by self-interest. Moral judgments, however, are not made from the point of each particular individual. If they were, they would become so relative as to lose all meaning. Morality must be objective. Therefore moral distinctions must be based upon a standard other than pleasure.
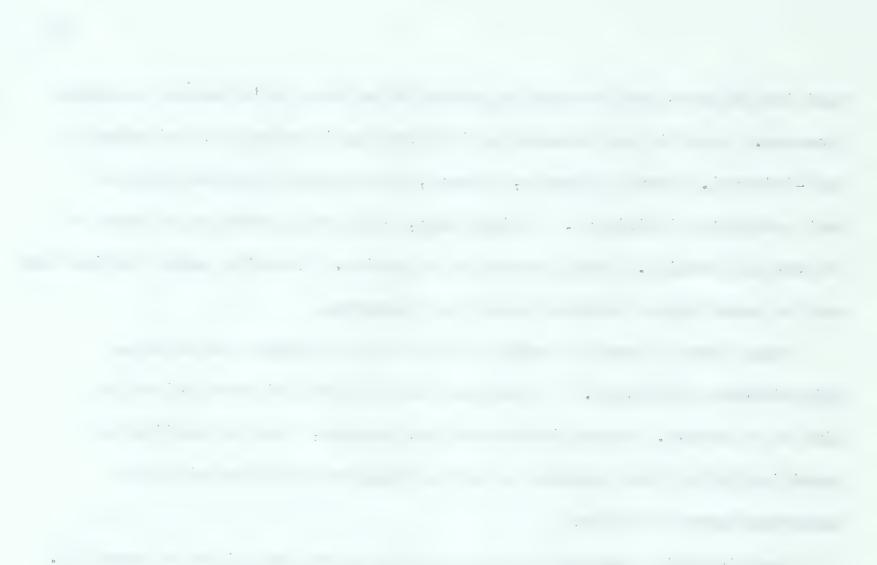
Hume offers a standard against which moral judgments can be made. This standard is justice.[1] It derives from the need of human beings to live in a society. Having introduced this concept, Hume has admitted at least implicitly that pleasure is not an adequate basis from which to understand moral behavior.

The discussion has now brought us to the second definition of morality. Morality is a consequence of the requirement that man live within a social context. The prime necessity of social living is stability, the purpose of which is to allow the acquisition of property, i.e. the necessities of life. The demands which society makes on each of its members result from the need for stability. The principle which epitomizes these demands is justice.

Justice is a principle which allows Hume to account for the emergence of morality, and in addition, provide the basis for the moral-nonmoral distinction. Morality emerges as a result of social interaction. Co-operation and predictability must be present if society is to achieve the ends for which it was created. Moral feelings are assigned to those actions which directly affect the social structure. That is to say, when interaction occurs with other persons concerning property in the broad sense, morality

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[1] See pp. 56-58.

is involved. Because these actions either strengthen or weaken the stability

of society, they are given a special significance of an ethical nature.

This theory does seem to offer an adequate explanation of the special

category called morality. Because the actions of an individual affect

persons other than himself, the other persons involved must be considered.

The result is a code which regulates individual behavior not specifically

in the interests of the individual, but in the interests of society.

However, is this theory capable of providing a basis for analyzing

moral behavior as such? In other words, does the theory provide standards

against which the individual can determine not the moral-nonmoral distinction,

but the difference between that which is morally right and that which is

morally wrong? Hume does not think that it does. I would agree, but for

different reasons. Hume suggests that there must be a feeling attached to

moral judgments which provides the basis for the distinction. The feeling

which he presents to complete his theory is sympathy. In my opinion, Hume

has missed the basic difficulty. However, this view will be discussed

following an analysis of Hume's third definition of morality.

The concept of sympathy is introduced to draw together both definitions

of morality described above and thus avoid the difficulties inherent in each

when taken separately. The third position, which utilizes the concept of

sympathy, could with some justification be said to be Hume's final statement

on the subject as it constitutes the basis of his summary of Book Three.[1]

In essence it states that those actions which fall under the category of

morality and which result in a feeling of satisfaction are morally correct;

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 618.

if a feeling of uneasiness results, the action is morally wrong. Thus, the category of morality is defined by the concept of justice. Satisfaction and uneasiness are synonymous for pleasure and pain. Thus, both the psychological and the sociological influence are tied together; but are they really?

Our sympathetic reaction is determined by the feeling of pleasure or pain which results. This ties all moral judgments to self-interest. We judge to be right those actions which are in our specific interest. The same holds true for those actions which we judge to be wrong. Yet, the whole basis of morality depends on a general or disinterested or objective judgment. Otherwise moral judgments become completely subjective and stability in the social order becomes impossible. Therefore, Hume must go on to say that sympathy is determined by a general or objective assessment of the situation. And now the circle just described begins again. Hume's entire theory begs the question.

Hume's description of moral conduct begs the question because of an irreconcilable incompatibility between the nature of morality and the nature of individual motivation. For a society to continue to exist it must at times make demands which are in the interests of the group. These demands are such that an individual may have to ignore his own self-interest if the demands of the group are to be met. An individual might find the keeping of a promise very unpleasant and difficult. Yet in the interests of social stability it is necessary that the individual keep his word regardless of the detrimental personal effects which might result.

On the other hand, Hume insists that the only possible motivation for any individual action is a desire for pleasure. The passions are the source of all action; and they are guided in turn by a desire to achieve pleasure and avoid pain. If all actions are so motivated, in what sense can an individual act from within a context other than self-interest? Although Hume frequently implies that altruistic actions are possible, yet the logic of his argument forces him to return to the position that all action is motivated by a desire for pleasure. As a result Hume is unable to give a conclusive answer to the question of the basis of moral judgments. Because of this, his conclusion begs the question.

Although on final analysis Hume's theory must fail, for reasons stated above, nevertheless, three points made in the theory are philosophically valid and of real significance. The first point has been discussed. Values are a phenomenon which emerge from social situations and cannot be understood unless in the context. The second and third points concern the relativity of moral standards and the influence of society in determining those standards. Many contemporary philosophers have suggested that moral judgments are based on feelings. As such they are incapable of further justification and analysis. Consequently, these standards must be considered completely subjective in nature and thus relative to the individual alone. Ayer, in his book, Language, Truth and Logic, expounds this theory and uses it as a basis for rejection of the possibility of moral philosophy. This attitude is frequently though inaccurately traced to Hume.

Hume, as the above evaluation indicates, rejected the notion that morality was completely dependent upon the emotions. Human behavior is essentially social. Life depends on the ability of the individual to communicate and co-operate with other individuals. Promises are one specific form of social obligation which is necessitated by the requirements of social living. Hume comments:

> "A resolution is the natural act of the mind, which promises express; but were there no more than a resolution in the case, promises wou'd only declare our former motives, and wou'd not create any new motive or obligation. They are the conventions of men, which create a new motive, when experience has taught us, that human affaires wou'd be conducted much more for mutual advantage, were there certain symbols or signs instituted, by which we might give each other security of our conduct in any particular affaire. After these signs are instituted, whoever uses them is immediately bound by his interest to execute his engagements, and must never expect to be trusted any more, if he refuse to perform what he promis'd."[1]

Society operates on the assumption that its members will observe certain conventions. If these conventions are ignored, the individual is unable to predict the actions of others in the future. Thus, trust upon which mutual assistance is based becomes illusory and co-operation ceases.

Morality is based on the acceptance of objective standards by a large proportion of the society. Therefore, morality cannot be relative to the feelings of each individual. If moral standards are subjective, morality does not exist; and without morality social living is impossible. This fact cannot be ignored and must be completely devastating to such philosophers as Ayer who dismiss moral philosophy on the grounds that moral standards are completely subjective.

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[1] Ibid, p. 522. (The emphasis is mine.)

Further to this point, every moral system must be based on certain underlying standards which are objective in nature. These standards act as the basis for distinguishing between that which is morally acceptable and that which is not. It is often claimed that these standards are themselves relative to the society in which one lives. The varying moral codes of various societies are used to illustrate this theory. And this brings us to the last point mentioned above.

In what sense can it be said that morality is relative? If the past few paragraphs are correct, morality cannot be relative to the individual and his own particular ideas and feelings. However, it is conceivable that morality is relative to the social group or society in which one lives. If Hume is correct, morality is defined by the status quo of the society of which one is a member. Because of the strict causal necessity which Hume assumes to hold for all actions, he is unable to establish a basis other than society for defining morality. Justice is no more or no less than that which society defines to be just.

On the other hand, it is not generally accepted that the status quo is sacrosanct. Individuals are not always willing to rest satisfied with the laws or attitudes of their society.

Hume is unable to consider the alternatives because of his restricted view of the power of reason. The understanding is unable to pass beyond the sphere of that which is, to the sphere of that which should be. Hume is caught in the same trap as modern science as it attempts to explain human behavior in a strictly causal manner. Unless one is willing to investigate the possibility of free will, the method which Hume has devised for under-

standing human actions is the only one available. In fact, Hume has not developed a moral philosophy; he has developed a theory of conduct. And this explains to a large extent Hume's preoccupation with essentially sociological and psychological problems.

The alternative which Hume has not investigated is that standards of morality can be assessed and evaluated on philosophical grounds. This approach would have to assume that all behavior is not causally determined but can be influenced or motivated directly by the findings or beliefs of the practical reason. The freedom of the understanding to direct action, which Hume allows at certain stages of The Treatise, assumes that reason can motivate action directly. However, Hume in the over-all context of the Treatise rejects this assumption.

Hume's moral philosophy fails because he makes no attempt to discover a basis from which the standards set by society can be evaluated. It will be the contention of the final chapter that because Hume could find no answer to this last problem his theory of knowledge as well as his theory of conduct fails. The implications of this statement for the fact-value relationship will be established, as well, in the final chapter.

CHAPTER IV: THE DILEMMA OF DETERMINISM

INTRODUCTION[1]

In the previous chapters a number of Hume's ideas and arguments have been described and criticized but generally within the context which Hume himself prescribes as the proper one for the problems involved. No attempt has been made to criticize the attitude, approach, or methodology which Hume brings to the treatment of the subject matter. This way of managing a critique does have some drawbacks. Much discussion might have been avoided if an earlier attempt had been made to detect errors in Hume's formulation of the problems involved. On the other hand, many philosophers have accepted Hume's approach and have gone on to discuss the validity of the arguments. There is a certain value to be gained from this approach. If Hume's methodology is inadequate or implies inconsistencies, this will almost certainly be reflected in the answers given to individual problems. Thus errors found in the specific arguments developed to defend specific solutions to problems raised may point to inadequacies in the method as well as to corroborate criticisms raised on that basic level.

Given this method of discussing The Treatise, it is now necessary to assess Hume's methodological approach to the theory of human conduct and moral philosophy.

Because of the emphasis placed on the sceptical treatment which Hume gives a number of epistemological problems in An Enquiry Concerning

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[1] It should be noted that Chapter IV is entirely evaluative in nature. Those aspects of the Treatise which are being evaluated in this chapter have all been described at length in earlier chapters.

Human Understanding, it is often assumed that Hume is not interested in
developing one unified system of philosophy. It is certainly true that
the Enquiries place more emphasis on the analysis of particular problems
than on the development of a general theoretical position. The Treatise,
on the other hand, places the emphasis on a general and unified theory of
human conduct. The proof of this lies in a brief glance at the table of
contents and a cursory inspection of the development of various arguments
in The Treatise. The argument begins with an analysis of the 'understanding.'
Having established his epistemological position, Hume moves to a considera-
tion of the role which the passions, otherwise referred to as the emotions
or the affections, play in human behavior. Hume concludes with a lengthy
discussion of morality. It is clear from the development of the argument
that Hume considers the first two books of The Treatise to be a preliminary
to his discussion of morality. Thus it is important to study Hume's entire
system if one is to realize the impact which areas of philosophy, not
directly connected to morality, have on a proper understanding of that
subject.

The following section will be devoted to an analysis of the methodo-
logical implications of the various principles of human conduct which Hume
develops.

PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN CONDUCT

1. The Idea-Impression Distinction

The constant emphasis which Hume places on this distinction throughout
The Treatise is ample evidence of the important role which it plays in his

analysis of human conduct. Hume is very concerned to limit the influence of reason on human behavior. This stems from a desire to disprove the validity of the rationalistic approach to ethics. In the process, Hume assumes solutions to many problems which deserve independent analysis. The problems raised by the category of 'perception' have already been discussed as they affected the treatment of problems within the framework of the theory. By formulating the category of 'perception,' Hume clearly creates and accepts without question the distinction between the perceived object and the perceiver. Hume's treatment of the notion of causation is limited because of his inability to recognize the importance of this distinction. Kant's explicit recognition and analysis of this distinction allowed him to solve some of the difficulties raised by Hume's formulation and implicitly contained in this categorization. It should be added that the problem of causation will be raised later in the chapter and discussed in detail.

More important for our present discussion is the relationship of ideas to impressions. For in developing this relationship, Hume ignores some basic problems, the solution of which is essential to the treatment of various other principles of human conduct.

Hume's chief concern in developing the impression-idea distinction is to isolate a priori reasoning and determine the logical limitations which must be placed on its application. However, in so doing, he virtually ignores other types of reasoning and forces the reader to infer indirectly the positive role of reason in the acquisition of knowledge. This method leaves a large area of epistemology uninvestigated. For example, Hume

develops the relationship of impressions to ideas, but not the relationship of ideas to impressions. Ideas are meaningful only if they are caused by an impression. Reason can tell us nothing about the world a priori. This is acceptable as far as it goes. However, because of the limited epistemological value placed on the operation of the reason, Hume is unable to evaluate within his theoretical framework the direct influence of the conceptual structure of thought on knowledge.

There are two specific areas which are obvious examples of the fallacy of this limited view. Kant develops the first area at length in his analysis of synthetic a priori reasoning. It is not the purpose of this thesis to evaluate the Kantian epistemology. The example is valuable for our purposes only insofar as it indicates that any theory of knowledge must analyze the role which synthetic reasoning plays in the acquisition of knowledge.

The second area involves the inclusion of a conceptual framework which is capable of analyzing the function of language in the acquisition of knowledge. Language is not understandable on a priori grounds. Further, it is not derived from the world of impressions. On the other hand, it seems to be a prerequisite of both perception and reasoning. Therefore, it falls into neither of Hume's categories yet is vital to both. Perhaps it is unfair to suggest that Hume should have foreseen the more recent interest in the role of language as a limiting factor in the development of knowledge. However, it does seem strange that Hume is content with a simple, almost one-to-one relationship of impressions to ideas.

It would be wise to digress briefly to illustrate the importance of understanding the relationship of language to knowledge. B. L. Whorf in his book, Language, Thought and Reality,[1] explains by reference to specific cultures the influence which the conceptual framework embodied in the language of the user has on the acquisition of knowledge. The ability of the individual to know is clearly limited by the language he is using. An excellent although well worn example is the Eskimo's conception of snow as compared to that of a person speaking English. For the 'white man' there are a few varieties of the one 'object' called snow. The Eskimo is unable to understand the word 'snow' as his language contains reference to more than twenty 'objects' which we would classify under a single concept. Many other examples could be used and are used by Whorf to describe the influence of language in directing our awareness toward certain phenomena and away from others. The human mind is selective in its acquisition of knowledge. Hume is unable to analyze the basis of this selective process within the limited theoretical structure which he allows.

The Philosophical Investigations[2] by Wittgenstein is perhaps the best recent example of the interest shown by contemporary philosophy in the influence of language in the process of conceptualization. The early paragraphs of the Philosophical Investigations go to some lengths to prove that thought, in the normal sense of that word, is not possible at all unless it is logically preceded by the conceptual framework supplied by language. For example, Wittgenstein suggests that an ostensive definition has no meaning unless it is preceded by knowledge of a language.

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[1] B. L. Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality, M.I.T. Press, Mass., 1956.

[2] L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1958.
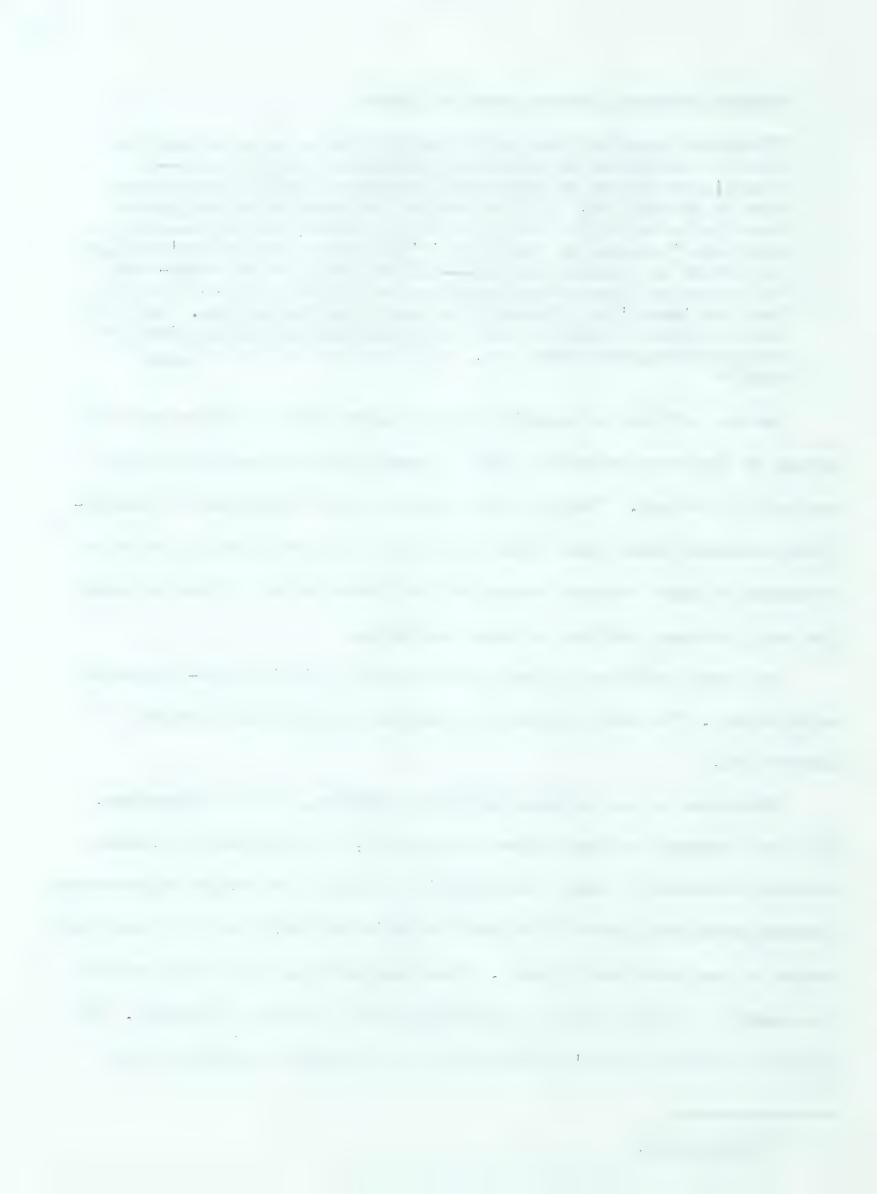
Suppose, however, someone were to object:

"It is not true that you must already be master of a language in
order to understand an ostensive definition: all you need--of
course!--is to know or guess what the person giving the explana-
tion is pointing to. That is whether for example to the shape of
the object, or to its colour, or to its number, and so on.--And
what does 'pointing to the shape,' 'pointing to the colour' consist
in? Point to a piece of paper.--And now point to its shape--now
to its number (that sounds queer).--How did you do it?--You will say
that you 'meant' a different thing each time you pointed. And if I
ask how that is done, you will say you concentrated your attention
on the colour, the shape, etc. But I ask again: how is that
done?"[1]

One may not wish to accept without a great deal of further analysis

either of the views presented above. However, that these areas require

analysis is obvious. The point being made is that the method of categor-

izing knowledge which Hume develops as well as the relationship which he

conceives to exist between impressions and ideas is too limited to reveal

the many problems involved in human knowledge.

The above criticism is concerned primarily with the idea-impression

relationship. The next problem is concerned only with the category of

impressions.

The source of all action, including knowledge, is the impressions.

This one category, as was pointed out earlier, is subdivided into sense

data and emotions by Hume in an attempt to reflect the obvious distinctions

between sensations caused by external objects and feelings which have their

source in the individual himself. Hume concludes that all human behavior

is caused by the passions and ultimately by the desire for pleasure. The

problems created by Hume's insistence on the primary importance of the

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[1] Ibid, p. 16.

pleasure principle have been described in detail. The problems explored at that time lead one to question the adequacy of this portion of Hume's theory. It is not surprising that the attempt to account for all behavior within one theory leads Hume to conclude that the behavior thus described could be understood by reference to one principle. On the other hand, the inability of one principle to describe all human behavior suggests that a more complete and detailed conceptual framework is required.

Are the emotions in any strict causal sense the source of all human behavior? There are many passages in The Treatise which suggest that even Hume doubts that this is the case. However, he is forced on many occasions to return to this position. The impetus for the retreat is Hume's assumption that all human behavior can be explained by reference to one all-inclusive theory.

The problem revolves around the concept 'motivation' and the relationship of motivation to the passions. 'Motivation' can mean many things. In fact, the meaning of the term in ordinary usage relies almost completely on the context of the passage in which it occurs. It can refer to a specific cause, for example hunger. Or it can refer to a goal which the individual wishes to achieve, such as a state of pleasure. In addition, the word 'motivation' can refer to the rules by which one's behavior is guided, such as honesty. Hume uses the term in all these contexts and others as well. The result is that when Hume suggests that all behavior is motivated by the passions, he is really telling us very little.

R. S. Peters, in his book, The Concept of Motivation,[1] analyzes the concept of motivation and suggests the various implications it has for an understanding of human behavior. There is for example "his reason" for acting the way he did. That is to say the explanation for an action may lie in the logic of the situation. Man has norms of behavior, customs, values, and so on. These things do not always involve goals and objectives. For example, honesty is not a goal but may influence how a person pursues goals. In some cases a description of the situation in these terms may be sufficient to explain a person's behavior.

One can also refer to "the reason" for someone's actions. "His reason" implies a consciousness of one's goals. "The reason" might coincide with "his reason," but might also be explained by reference to a causal model. Both types of explanation must, however, be considered.

As a final example, end-state explanations are often useful. The reference in such cases is usually to a "homeo-static" principle. Freud's pleasure principle is an example of this type of explanation. However, the desire of the organism to reach a state of equilibrium cannot always be construed as the explanation of all goal-directed behavior.[2]

These explanations and many others are given at various times in answer to the question, 'Why did he do that?' To rely on any one such concept to provide a sufficient explanation in all cases is to reduce human behavior to an absurdly simple level. The conclusion of Chapter III attempts to show the result of reducing the explanation of human behavior to one principle.

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[1] R. S. Peters, The Concept of Motivation.

[2] See also A. C. MacIntyre, The Unconscious.

Hume ends up by arguing in a circle and thus begging the question.

The conclusion to be reached by this criticism of Hume is that any theory of conduct which hopes to develop a useful conceptual framework for the analysis of human behavior must leave room for both common sense and technical descriptions of behavior as well as for a method of determining the validity of each type of explanation in various situations.

In concluding the analysis of Hume's first principle, it is necessary to defend the inclusion of epistemology in a study of moral theory and the fact-value relationship. Theory of knowledge is introduced to clarify the nature and validity of knowledge. If the validity of our perceptual world can be established, and our perceptions accurately categorized, it should be possible to ascertain the basic factors which influence human behavior. This in turn will provide the tools with which it may be possible to establish and analyze the role of values in human conduct as well as their origin.

2. Causation

The principle of causality is the keystone of Hume's theory of human conduct. Yet Hume's reputation as a philosopher is to a very considerable extent based on the scepticism which seems to be implied by his treatment of this concept. Probably the basis for this common interpretation is the context of Hume's analysis of causality in the Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding as opposed to The Treatise.

Whatever the general interpretation of Hume's treatment of causality, the reasons for the introduction of the concept to The Treatise as well as the conclusions which result are clear.

Initially, Hume is concerned to isolate conceptually the cause of human behavior. Secondly and more important, considering the period during which Hume wrote, he is concerned to isolate those principles which serve as the laws which determine human behavior.

Hume's analysis of causation and the application of his findings have been criticized in many quarters in recent years. Therefore, it is essential to understand exactly what the theory of causality is intended to do. Hume was writing during a period of intense and very successful scientific activity. The most obvious example is the work of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727). The work of science generally seemed to be ample proof of the operation of a strict causal principle in the physical universe. At any rate, this was considered to be the basis of scientific explanation and prediction. On the other hand, science had not yet moved with any force into the field of human behavior. The religious objections which had been brought to bear against science in its early post-renaissance form had merely retreated and could be expected to appear very forcibly at the first encroachment of science in the field of human behavior. Theology had taught for some time the vast separation of man and his physical environment. Hence, any attempt to prove that man could be studied using the same assumptions which had proven so successful in the physical sciences, thus linking man and his physical environment, was unthinkable and needless to say, blasphemous.

Hume considers his Treatise to be a scientific analysis of human nature. Although we may disagree with this assessment of The Treatise, nevertheless, this belief shapes the method which Hume applies in the development of his theory. If human conduct is indeed amenable to scientific investigation, Hume must prove that the fundamental relationship holding among objects in the physical world, which is also the basic principle in scientific explanation, also operates in human nature.

The only mode of approach available to Hume is to determine the nature of causality and compare its operation in the physical world and in human behavior. Earlier, we have described Hume's analysis of causality in detail. Suffice it to say that the two components of causality are a conjunction of events accompanied by a feeling which leads us to apply the causal relationship to the events involved.

Hume does not conclude that his analysis has undermined a basic premise of scientific investigation. He does not state that there is no longer any reason to suppose that human beings can predict future occurrences. Quite the opposite. For Hume goes on to apply the causal principle to human behavior. The same components which characterize causality in physical events are also present in human conduct. Therefore, the principle can be applied with equal validity to human behavior.

The importance of the causal principle in Hume's theory of human conduct should now be clear. The general cause of action must be impressions. The analysis of the causal principle shows that human behavior is determined in exactly the same manner as physical occurrences. It remains only to isolate the specific cause of human conduct and the theory is complete.

The methodology of this portion of Hume's work is clear. We must now ask ourselves, 'Is it adequate?'. Considerable doubt has been cast by contemporary philosophers on the validity of Hume's approach to causality. More specifically, some philosophers notably Wittgenstein have suggested that any question which asks for the grounds for a belief that a future event will occur given the proper sequence of events is not a proper question.[1] It is precisely the grounds of that belief that Hume seems to question.

It may appear that Hume is formulating his question in such a manner as to challenge the validity of ordinary prediction. It may also be the case that his conclusions if applied to this type of prediction seem to throw doubt on its validity. On the other hand, if the above interpretation is correct, Hume is not concerned in The Treatise with common sense predictions based on past experience. He is concerned with scientific explanation and the type of prediction which follows immediately from this type of explanation. Further, Hume is not concerned with the grounds for belief in the everyday predictability of events. He feels everyday predictions to be quite adequate for the job they are meant to do. Neither is it true to say that Hume is undermining the concept of causality. He is merely redefining this term; he has no doubts about its validity or applicability. Once again, his entire theory of human nature relies upon the applicability of this concept to human actions.

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[1] See Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, p. 136.

The real problem arises when someone suggests that because causality cannot be shown to exist and cannot be proven a priori to exist, it cannot be applied in any explanation of physical events. Because causality is a fundamental premise in scientific prediction, such prediction has no rational basis. Further, if scientific predictability is irrational our prediction of various events on the basis of past experience must be equally irrational.

Wittgenstein, among others, has good reason to suggest that this type of questioning carries no meaning. Thus:

> "If anyone said that information about the past could not convince him that something would happen in the future, I should not understand him. One might ask him: What do you expect to be told, then? What sort of information do you call a ground for such a belief? What do you call 'conviction?' In what kind of way do you expect to be convinced?--If these are not grounds, then what are grounds?--If you say these are not grounds, then you must surely be able to state what must be the case for us to have the right to say that there are grounds for our assumption."[1]

Hume is not challenging this sort of belief. Thus this objection cannot be brought against Hume's analysis of causality.

The validity of Hume's deterministic approach to human conduct will be analyzed under the concept of "liberty." Further, the adequacy of Hume's analysis of the concept itself has already been carried out. The reader need only be reminded of the comment which immediately preceded this section on the validity of an all-inclusive theory of human behavior. However, in such a theory the need to develop the notion of causality is evident.

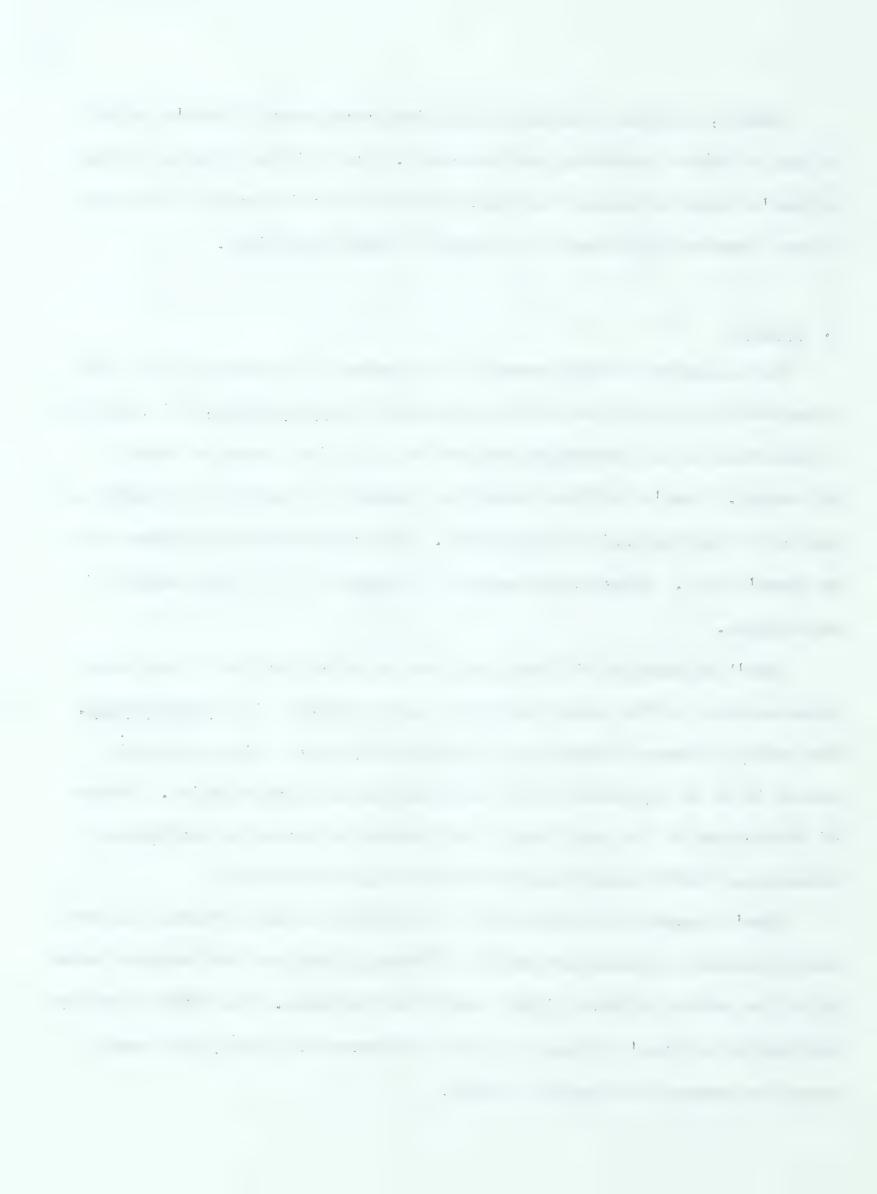[1] Wittgenstein, op. cit., p. 136, remark #486.

Finally, it is of interest to note the resemblance of Hume's method to much of modern psychology and sociology. Many of the fallacies evident in Hume's theory of conduct are also present in the theoretical structure of many theories expounded in the name of these disciplines.

3. Liberty

The inclusion of this concept in the present discussion is not to be understood as a reflection of its importance in The Treatise, but rather as a reflection of the importance assigned to it in the history of moral philosophy. Hume's attitude toward the concept of free will or liberty is implied in his discussion of causality. The causal principle either holds or doesn't hold. There is no question of degree or of a third method of explanation.

Hume's discussion of liberty acts as an authentication of the above interpretation of the causal principle as he expounds it in The Treatise. The notion of human liberty must be rejected by Hume if the scientific method is to be applicable to an understanding of human behavior. Events or occurrences in the world are either ordered by chance or are causally connected. Hume's entire theory rules out any alternative.

Hume's reasons for rejecting the possibility of any alternatives have been explained in sufficient detail. However, there are two concepts under which the notion of human liberty could be introduced. The first occurs by implication in Hume's discussion of the influence of reason, the second under the concept of causality itself.

The role of reason has already been discussed at length.[1] Although Hume relies on a simple causal model as the only method permissible in the explanation of human conduct, he does at times imply that reason has an important interpretive and directive role in human behavior. It is but a small step to suggest that alternatives are available to the individual. Reason would then decide which action was most likely to meet the demands of the passions. However, when Hume is faced with the implications of this view as it relates to the causal picture of human conduct which he is concerned to develop, he rejects the possibility of reason influencing action in any direct manner and returns to the very deterministic theme which runs throughout the Treatise. Nevertheless, the opportunity to discuss the notion of liberty within the context of the role of reason is present, even if largely undeveloped.

Secondly, in his discussion of necessary connection, Hume suggests that causality is ascribed to events on the basis of conjunction and a certain feeling. The examples used to illustrate the point always involve objects and never human actions. That is to say, Hume develops his concept of causality using physical models only. He infers that because human actions can be predicted, the causal principle must be applicable here as well. However, one important component exists for physical occurrences which is not present in the case of human actions and that is feeling which compels one to infer the operation of the causal principle. It is not the case that conjunction of events where human conduct is involved is always or even frequently followed by a feeling that the events are causally connected.

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[1] See page 60.

If Hume had adhered to the description of causality which he developed, he could have suggested that sometimes human conduct can be described by reference to a causal model, while at other times this method would be inappropriate. It is clear, however, that although the opportunity to discuss the notion of human liberty was available at various points in the Treatise, Hume could not introduce the subject in a favorable context. Hume assumes that human conduct is completely explicable in scientific terms. Any suggestion that the causal principle was not operative in certain areas of human behavior would immediately imply that human behavior was not open to the complete explanation which Hume was attempting. Hence, Hume must reject any attempt to defend the concept of liberty within the context of human behavior.

The problem of moral judgments does not really enter the discussion of human liberty. Hume merely suggests that moral judgments would be impossible if human behavior was ordered by chance. The rejection of any possible alternative to a causal approach to human behavior is therefore an excellent illustration of Hume's primary objective, which is to produce a theory of conduct as opposed to a philosophy of morality.

The shortcomings implicit in this approach have been partially described under the heading of causality. More will be made of the inadequacies in the section specifically devoted to Hume's moral philosophy. However, the problem of personal identity does not fall under either of these headings and will be discussed briefly at this point.

The problem of human liberty usually occurs with or leads to a discussion of philosophy of mind. To understand the basis of human action, many philosophers consider it necessary to discuss the many problems associated with philosophy of mind, such as the ability to judge and to evaluate, both of which are involved in human conduct. The problem of personal identity usually arises in this context.

Hume's theory allows for an easy, although inadequate, description of personal identity.

> "...I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement."[1]

The nature of perceptions is adequately explained according to Hume in his theory of knowledge. The cause and nature of perceptions can be indicated by reference to the causal principle. This explains all we need to know about thought. The problem of personal identity can be relegated to the feelings for explanation.

The point here is that there is no room in Hume's theory of human conduct for an analysis of liberty. The problems usually associated with the question of individual freedom do not arise in Hume's philosophy because of his method. His inability to treat the problem of personal identity in a more sophisticated manner is but one more example of the limiting nature of Hume's approach to the subject of human conduct.

4. The Pleasure Principle

This important aspect of Hume's philosophy has been adequately treated in the section of this chapter concerned with the idea-impression distinction.

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[1] Hume, op. cit., p. 252.

Suffice it to say that Hume considers this to be one of the five important principles of human conduct.

5. Justice

It is not until Hume introduces the concept of justice that he begins to consider the problem of moral behavior as it is generally understood. One of his important contributions to moral philosophy is the insistence that moral values are a function not of psychological considerations, but of the social requirements of human existence.

Hume is concerned to understand why values exist. He suggests that they emerge as a result of social interaction. He also suggests that the concept of justice is central to an understanding of moral behavior. In my opinion, Hume explains the existence of morality very well. However, the theoretical approach which he uses does not allow him to investigate various methods of evaluating the standards of moral judgments as opposed to the fact of their existence. For example, throughout his description of justice, Hume does not comment on the validity of the principle of justice developed by a society in order to ensure the maintenance of stability. In fact, the only criterion which Hume suggests is the effectiveness of the accepted morality in maintaining a stable society. In other words, the status quo determined that which is moral and that which is immoral.

Hume's method of analysis prevents any discussion of moral standards as such. Moral behavior is determined by external and emotional forces as is all other types of behavior. And as such, moral theory becomes one small

part of an overall theory of conduct. Hume does try at some stages of book three to establish the basis for determining the best possible standard of moral conduct. However, his attempts fail because of his methodological assumption that all behavior must be causally determined. The direct impact of this method on moral philosophy will be seen in the following section.

TOWARD A MORAL PHILOSOPHY

The Dilemma Formulated

The deterministic interpretation of human behavior has as a rule encountered the greatest opposition when it is applied to moral behavior. Perhaps this is because morality, or rather the ability to make moral judgments, is felt by most people to be a highly important aspect of their individual and collective lives. Although we feel greater compulsion to defend morality against the determinist, the impact of determinism on theory of knowledge or philosophy of mind and for that matter on all academic disciplines is no less dramatic. This point will be demonstrated by implication only.

To understand Hume's implicit description of the fact-value relationship, it is necessary to understand the relationship of the theory of conduct to morality as both are described in The Treatise. The interpretation of this relationship will be based on the impact of Hume's theory of conduct on what I consider to be the three major components inherent in any moral judgment.

1. The practical situation.

This expression itself is not very enlightening. However, the reference is to the actual situation which elicits a moral judgment. Moral judgments

are made after the occurrence of an event. We are rejecting hypothetical projections or imaginary situations as uninteresting exceptions. On this basis it seems fair to suggest that every moral judgment is preceded by a practical situation which is unaffected by the judgment but necessary to it.

2. The moral principle standard or rule.

This component is very important and the method of establishing it is controversial. That a standard or principle must be involved in every judgment or decision, be it moral or otherwise, is to my mind implied by the very notion of judgment. To say that an argument is invalid is to say that the argument ignores one or more generally accepted rules of logic. Similarly, to suggest that an action was immoral is to imply that the individual concerned disobeyed some moral rule. Actions can be judged moral or immoral only if those actions can be shown to transgress some standard which defines morality and which applies in this particular instance. If there are no laws, there can be no criminals. If there are no moral principles, there can be no immoral actions.

3. The act of judging.

This third component exists only if the first two also are present. Judgment implies comparison; and comparison can occur only if there are two things to be compared. The basis upon which moral judgments are or should be made must be established by any theory which is concerned with an explanation of morality.

The method which is used to establish these three components will determine the nature of the philosophy involved.

Hume's philosophy can be interpreted in two ways. In the first, what might be called strict determinism is involved. The second interpretation suggests a more flexible determinism. Both theories to my mind are defective.

Hume does not vary in his view that morality is meaningful only if it has some practical application. The practical situation, however, will vary with the circumstances and so is unimportant to the analysis of moral judgments. The second and third components do vary depending on the interpretation used and as a result the following evaluation will concentrate on Hume's analysis of a moral judgment and a moral principle.

As a strict determinist, Hume maintains that morality is defined by the society in which one lives. If social interaction is to be maintained, certain rules must be followed by those concerned so as to ensure the stability of the methods of acquiring property. The conduct of the individual, on the other hand, is based on a desire for pleasure. Therefore, moral judgments are made on the basis of the feelings of uneasiness or sympathy which an action elicits. It is necessary to recall Hume's insistence that all human actions are causally related to the passions.

The difference between immoral and moral actions is defined by society and the actual judgment is a reflection of a feeling. But to reflect a feeling is not to make a comparison and hence cannot be properly called a judgment at all. Further, unless the standard which is used to differentiate the moral from the immoral is publicly accepted, the criterion or standard becomes private and of no use in providing the stability for which it was originally created by society.

Morality must be a public phenomenon. It does not fulfill its purpose unless it can be used to indicate how a majority of people will react under particular circumstances. A promise is of no value if the recipient cannot be sure that it will be carried out.

The implications of strict determinism for the fact-value relationship are obvious. The rules laid down by society are ascertainable using scientific methods. The personal values of the individual can be translated into factual terms. Such a system could easily rewrite the English language in such a way as to avoid any use of the term value. One is forced to ask, however, 'If one's reaction to all situations is completely determined by psychological factors, such as a desire for pleasure, on what basis can one evaluate the validity of the theory?' One is compelled to say that Hume's theory is accurate if it gives me pleasure. And it is quite clear that this type of analysis gives only social scientists pleasure and hence on a general grounds, i.e. via the results of a survey, must be wrong. This example is both facetious and a correct application of the theory. In fact, we do have other and more adequate grounds for assessing the value of a theory. We do make moral judgments on grounds other than feelings of pleasure or pain. We are forced to look for a second interpretation of Hume which is more plausible and of some use in developing a moral philosophy.

A second interpretation is available and has previously been referred to as a more flexible determinism. In this case, the rule or standard is still determined by society. The individual is still motivated by the emotions. However, the reason is allowed a certain amount of flexibility

in ascertaining the framework within which actions must occur. The judgment
is made not on the basis of a feeling, but on an objective assessment of the
rules laid down by society. That is to say an action on this interpretation
is morally correct if it is guided by the rules of social living, not if it
arouses a feeling of pleasure.

It should be noted that this approach does not abandon the deterministic
point of view. It merely rejects the oversimplified position indicated
earlier by introducing a second influencing factor, namely society. All
conduct is caused. However, the second approach recognizes both psycho-
logical and sociological causes. As a result, the place of reason in human
conduct is recognized.

This variety of determinism looks more attractive than its counterpart
because it appears to give more freedom to the reason. The freedom involved,
however, is more apparent than real. The passions remain the only motivating
force in human conduct. More particularly, pleasure remains the chief cause
of behavior. Reason must guide conduct so as to meet the demands of the
passions while observing the rules and standards laid down by society.

This theory leads to a recognition of two types of values. There
are personal, or, using Hume's terminology, natural values. These are based
on likes or dislikes and determine the goal for which each person is striving.
There are also artificial values created by society. These might be
classified as comprising the system of rules called morality.

Values are still determined, but they do have an independent existence.
Reason is not strictly speaking determined by the passions. Because society

can only lay down general rules of procedure, the reason must assess the situation in terms of the rules which apply. A problem arises, however, when moral and personal values clash. The emotions may be completely opposed to any action which would cause extreme pain, such as diving into a cold lake to save a drowning person. In many cases that which is pleasurable is not that which is moral. If the theory is to work, reason must be capable of causing action which is not motivated by the passions. Because this conclusion cannot be avoided on the second interpretation, Hume frequently reverts to his first position.[1]
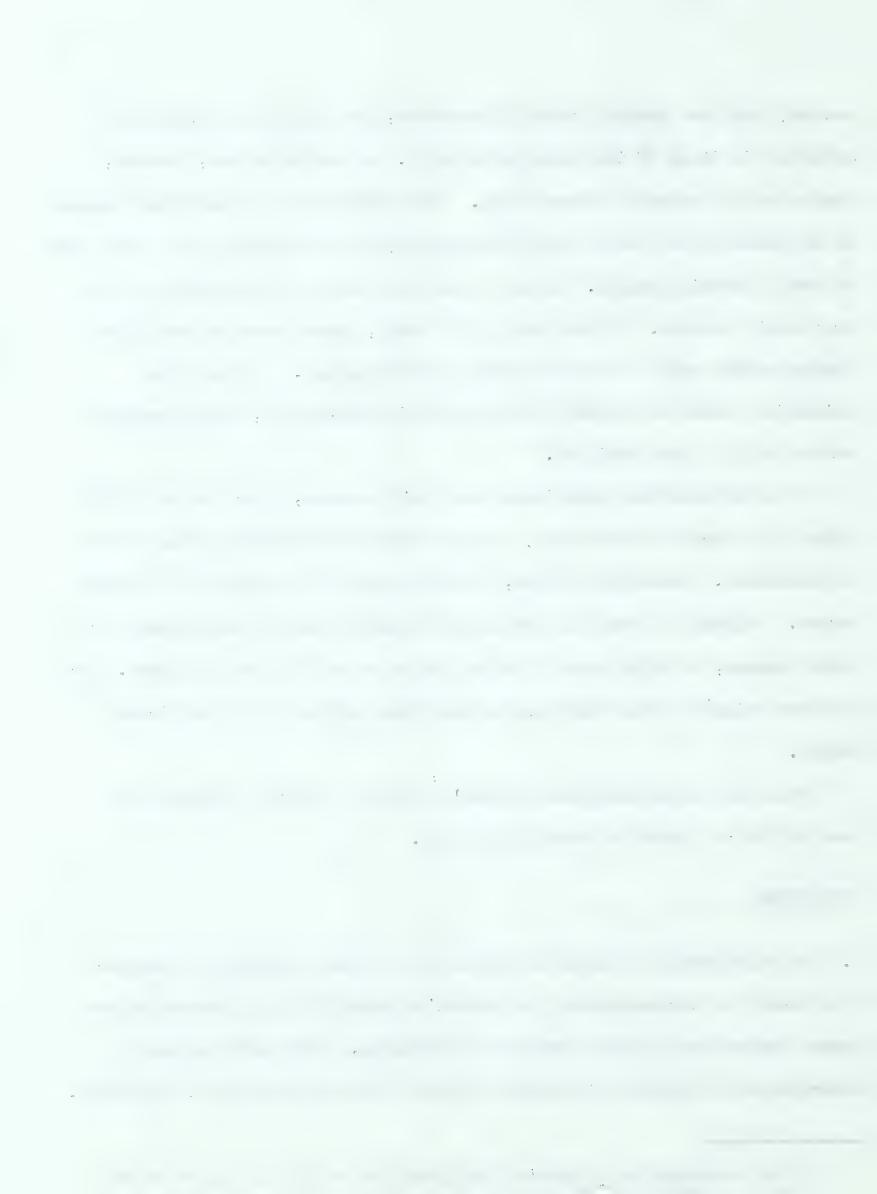
It would seem that this theory must fail because, while the ability to judge is allowed the individual, a strict causal description of his actions is maintained. According to Hume, either an action is caused or it is not caused. Judging is itself an action and therefore must be determined by a priori causes, in which case it can no longer be said to be a judgment. The problems raised by this view have already been pointed out in sufficient detail.

Thus both interpretations of Hume's theory of conduct preclude the possibility of a parallel moral philosophy.

CONCLUSION

1. The relationship of facts to values can only be understood if preceded by a theory of knowledge which is capable of describing in a comprehensive manner the various factors involved in knowledge. This must include a description of the role of practical reason in the acquisition of knowledge.

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[1] For a discussion of Hume's final position on this point, refer to Chapter III, page 67.

2. Further, the fact-value relationship can be understood only if preceded by a theory of morality. This must include an independent analysis of each of the components of morality listed above (pp. 92-93). It will also be necessary to describe the method used by the reason in relating each of these components to the other two.

3. A comparison of the methods employed in determining the theory of knowledge and the findings of that theory with the findings and methods of the theory of morality will enable one to determine the nature of the relationship in question.

4. On the basis of the analysis of Hume's philosophy of human conduct, it can be stated that a completely causal or pseudo-scientific explanation of human behavior will not provide an adequate epistemology, theory of conduct, or moral philosophy.

APPENDIX: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF EXPLANATION

AND JUSTIFICATION IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR

BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF

"TWO CONCEPTS OF RULES"

BY JOHN RAWLS

The purpose of this appendix is to reinforce certain aspects of the four conclusions drawn at the end of Chapter IV. The method used will differ quite considerably from that used in the preceding chapters. In addition, the basis for the analysis which is to follow is not Hume's Treatise, but an article written by John Rawls, entitled "Two Concepts of Rules."[1] The appendix will interest itself chiefly in a conceptual analysis of the difference between explanation and justification in human behavior.

Rawls' theory develops out of an attempt to defend the utilitarian theory of morality. He states, "I hope to show that if one uses the distinction in question then one can state utilitarianism in a way which makes it a much better explication of our considered moral judgments than these traditional objections would seem to admit."[2]

There are two factors which make Rawls' article interesting from our point of view. To begin with, the effect of his theory is to equate to a large extent explanation and justification where moral questions are involved. As may be recalled, one of the results of Hume's approach to human behavior is to equate these concepts.

Secondly, Hume considers the drive toward pleasure to be a highly important factor in all human actions. The utilitarian theory also emphasizes the importance of pleasure. Utilitarianism could be said to be a more advanced statement of the 'pleasure principle' which avoids some of the most obvious criticisms which could be raised against Hume's statement of the theory. As such, utilitarianism provides an interesting test case against which the position taken in this thesis can be tested and evaluated.

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[1] J. Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules," Philosophical Review, 1955.

[2] Ibid, p. 4.

I

The "practice" conception of rules is the name given by Rawls to the correct interpretation or explanation of rule-following behavior. He uses the term "practice" throughout "as a sort of technical term meaning any form of activity specified by a system of rules which defines offices, roles, moves, penalties, defenses, and so on, and which gives the activity its structure."[1] Examples of practices are games, rituals, trials and parliament.[2]

Two specific examples will serve to illustrate the meaning of the definition. The game of chess could be used as a familiar example. The game is governed by many rules which specify the type of board, the type and number of men to be used on each side, the moves available to each piece on the board and so on. The rules define the game. Without a prior knowledge of the rules, one cannot be said to know how to play chess. The game itself, Rawls would call a practice. This includes all the rules and regulations which structure the actual activity. The activity which derives its meaning from the practice is the movement of men on the board, the objective of which is to attempt to check-mate the opponent's "King."

The second example involves the legal system of a society. The role of judge is typical. The specific activities of a judge, while he is acting in his official capacity, are defined by a number of rules and customs. A sentence or legal ruling is given validity and force by the rules which govern the behavior of the judge. A judgment ceases to carry weight if

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[1] Ibid, p. 3.

[2] Ibid, p. 3.

it is discovered that one or more of the regulations have not been followed.

This second example illustrates an area where Rawls feels his concept of

rules is particularly effective, namely, legal systems.[1]

There are a number of points which he wishes to make about this

particular conception of rules.[2] To begin with, the rules of a practice

are logically prior to any particular activities defined by the practice.

If one carries out an activity defined by a practice, one implicitly accepts

that practice together with the rules which it entails. Rawls states:

> "Now what is meant by saying that the practice is logically
> prior to particular cases is this: given any rule which
> specifies a form of action (a move), a particular action which
> would be taken as falling under this rule given that there is
> the practice would not be described as that sort of action
> unless there was the practice. In the case of actions specified
> by practices it is logically impossible to perform them outside
> the stage-setting provided by those practices, for unless there
> is the practice, and unless the requisite proprieties are ful-
> filled, whatever one does, whatever movements one makes, will
> fail to count as a form of action which the practice specifies.
> What one does will be described in some other way."[3]

The importance of this point is reflected in the second aspect of the

practice conception of rules. Any action which falls under a practice is

fully explained by reference to that practice. For example, if an observer

at a baseball game asks, "why did that man walk to first base," a complete

answer is given if one refers to the ruling which says that the batter is

to receive a walk if four balls are thrown by the pitcher. If the observer

objects, one can only surmise that he does not understand the rules of the

game. The practice itself is the justification or explanation of the action

which falls under it.

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[1] Ibid, p. 32.

[2] Ibid, pp. 22-28.

[3] Ibid, p. 23.

Finally, there are no exceptions to the rule. All actions which are defined by a practice are governed by the rules of that practice. If the rules do not apply, then the action does not in fact fall under the practice. Rather, "an exception is a qualification or a further specification of the rule."[1]

Rawls is using an increasingly common conceptual device to differentiate between an explanation of a particular action and an explanation of the practice under which a particular action falls. In fact, he is applying at a practical level a distinction which has been developed at length in what might be considered a more theoretical study of philosophy of language. Because the concept of rules which Rawls is developing in his paper appears to be based upon a particular approach to meaning in language, it would be useful to look briefly at the theory as it is developed by Carnap in an article, "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology,"[2] and by Wittgenstein in the Philosophical Investigations.[3] The result will be to give us a better understanding of the impact of the theory on our understanding of moral judgments.

Carnap's paper is specifically concerned with an ontological dispute. However, his method of describing theory makes it very useful for our purposes as well. Language is analyzed into two distinct parts, consisting of a framework and the elements which the framework contains. The framework consists of the rules which systematize and regulate the use of language.

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[1] Ibid, p. 27.

[2] Linsky, Semantics and the Philosophy of Language, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1952.

[3] L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Oxford, 1958.

Within the framework are found the entities which make up the substance of language. The rules govern the manipulation of the linguistic entities or particles. Removed from the context of the theory, the words in isolation have no function and therefore no meaning. The theoretical framework is accepted or rejected on the basis of its usefulness.

Particular moves within the theory are fully explained by reference to the rules which govern those moves. If, for example, a particular move results in a conclusion which is unacceptable, one does not criticize the specific move. One criticizes the theory itself as it determines the moves which can be made within its structure.

The resemblance to Rawls' concept of rules is striking. If one is critical of a particular action (specified by the practice), one does not demand that the person involved refrain from acting in that manner. Instead one attempts to change the rules of the practice which determine the particular actions which fall under it.

Although there is a resemblance between Carnap's theory as expressed in "Empiricism, Ontology and Semantics" and Rawls' concept of rules, there is probably a more direct relationship between Wittgenstein's theory of meaning as expressed in the early comments of the _Investigations_ and Rawls' approach to moral judgments. Rawls' concept of a practice has all the characteristics of a language-game. Wittgenstein's discussion of ostensive definition is a case in point.

"Suppose, however, someone were to object: 'It is not true that you must already be master of a language in order to understand an ostensive definition: all you need--of course--is to know or guess what the person giving the explanation is pointing to. That is, whether for example, to the shape of the object, or to its colour, or to its number, and so on.'--And what does 'pointing to the shape,' 'pointing to the colour' consist in? Point to a piece of paper.-- And now point to its shape--now to its colour--now to its number (that sounds queer).--How did you do it?--You will say that you 'meant' a different thing each time you pointed. And if I ask how that is done, you will say you concentrated your attention on the colour, the shape, etc. But I ask again: how is that done?"[1]
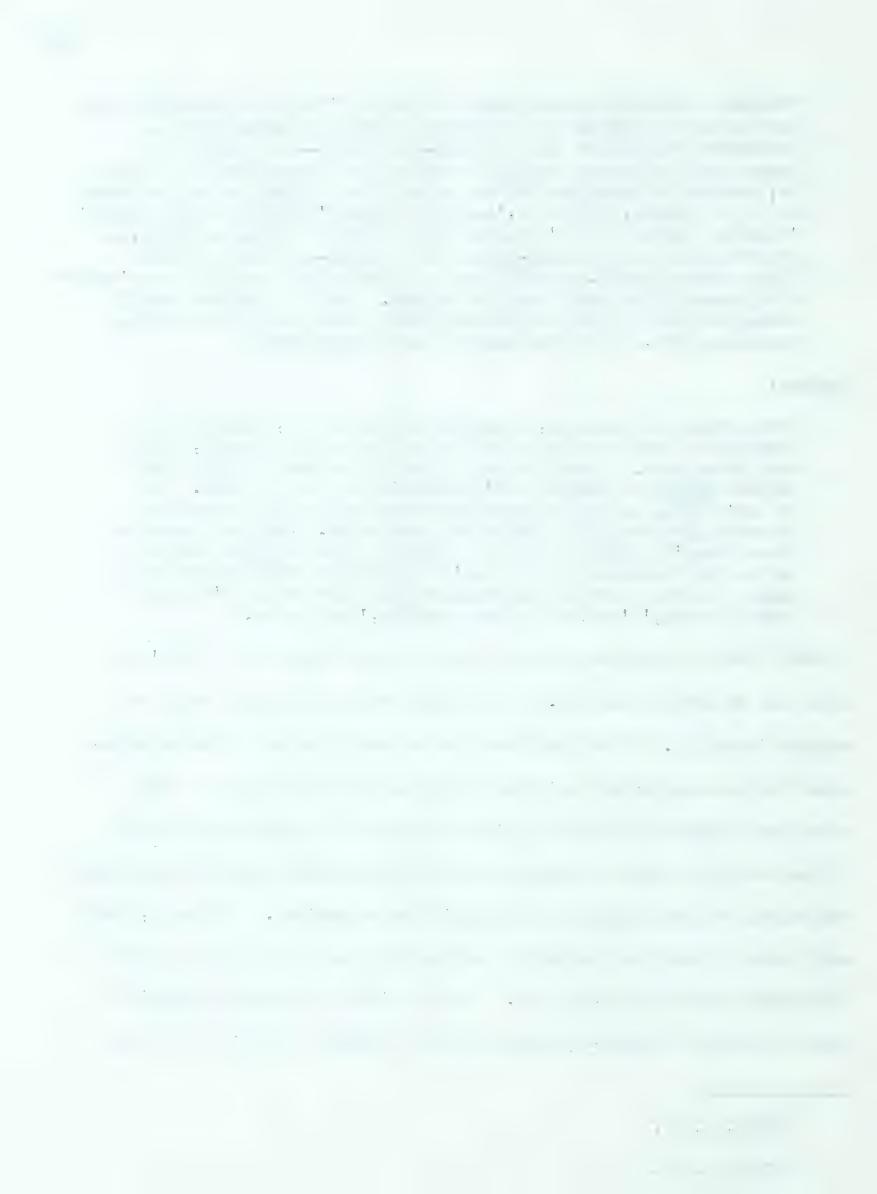
Further:

"You attend to the shape, sometimes by tracing it, sometimes by screwing up your eyes so as not to see the colour clearly, and in many other ways. I want to say: This is the sort of thing that happens while one directs one's attention to this or that. But it isn't these things by themselves that make us say someone is attending to the shape, the colour, and so on. Just as a move in chess doesn't consist simply in moving a piece in such-and-such a way on the board--nor yet in one's thoughts and feelings as one makes the move: but in the circumstances that we call 'playing a game of chess,' 'solving a chess problem,' and so on."[2]

It would sound strange to a chess player to hear someone say "that's a silly way to move the bishop." The player would immediately begin to explain the rules. If on the other hand a person who was known to understand the game suggested that chess would be more interesting if the rules were changed to allow the bishop to move in a manner appropriate to the rook, the player concerned would not immediately react by explaining the rules, but would perhaps investigate the suggestion. Similarly, Rawls would say, it would be foolish to inquire of a man why he did not cross the street against the red light. But if a traffic engineer suggested that the rules of street-crossing should be changed to allow for a free

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[1] Ibid, p. 16.

[2] Ibid, p. 17.

flow of traffic the suggestion would be considered seriously. The meaning

of a word is determined by its context or use; the explanation of an action

is determined by the practice under which it falls.

The distinction is thus clearly established. A word has meaning because

it is related to other words and has a use. An action is explicable because

it falls within the context of a practice which also has a use or function

to perform.

There is one further reference which could be usefully made before

concerning ourselves with the specific application of the theory under

discussion. This reference has greater bearing on the more practical

application of the conceptual analysis under consideration to theory of

conduct. R. S. Peters, in his book Theory of Motivation,[1] examines in

some detail the various types of explanation useful in understanding

human behavior. He suggests four different methods of explaining human

behavior, the first of which he terms "his reason." The answer to why

a person acted the way he did must frequently be given by referring to

the logic of the situation. Man has norms of behavior, customs, values,

and so on. These do not always involve goals or objectives. For example,

honesty is not a goal but may influence how a person pursues goals. As

a result, any explanation of human behavior must consider other than

mechanical causes.

The important point here is that often conduct can only be understood

in terms of a rule-following model. In other words, if one understands

the "practice" one can explain the behavior. The relevance of this reference

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[1] R. S. Peters, Theory of Motivation.

will not become altogether clear until a later point in the paper. However, the importance of the reference is its emphasis on explanation of human conduct and its relationship to a rule-following model. It will be a later contention that Rawls misapplies his conclusions and hence is unable to realize the real value of his concept of rules. This mistake results from the tendency to equate justification and explanation. It is not at all clear that an action is justified merely by pointing to the practice which prompted it. On the other hand, Rawls' evaluation does point to an example of confusion in theory of conduct particularly prevalent in psychology, which results in the inability to realize or recognize the importance of relating particular actions to their context when seeking for an explanation of certain varieties of human behavior. This point will be made again and at greater length in a discussion of Rawls' application of his theory to punishment and promising.

Rawls does not feel that the concept of rules which he has developed is applicable to all rules; nor is it capable of explaining all moral conduct. In fact the qualifications which he puts on his theory, particularly toward the end of the paper, make it difficult to determine exactly what he considers to be the proper application of the theory to moral judgments. He suggests that other distinctions can be drawn and that border-line cases occur which participate in a number of forms of explanations. However, Rawls does seem to imply that for specific cases the practice conception of rules is a sufficient explanation of moral judgments. If even this much is the case, we have grounds for disagreement.[1]

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[1] Note: the qualifications referred to are found on page 29 of Rawls' article (op. cit.). Further qualifications are made by referring to Wittgenstein's view of the fluid nature of a conceptual framework. This added reference to Wittgenstein, however, does not seem to place the final comment preceding the reference number in jeopardy.

II

The second section of the Appendix is concerned with the specific examples which Rawls offers as test cases of his theory of rules. Rawls develops his theory through a defense of utilitarianism against a number of objections which he feels to be invalidated using his conceptual approach to rules. The purpose of the Appendix is not the defense of the utilitarian theory of morality. Utilitarianism is merely the backdrop which allows Rawls to apply his method. The following discussion, as a result, will not be concerned with utilitarianism as such, but with the implications of the practice concept of rules for an understanding of moral judgments.

The first test case used involves punishment. Can a utilitarian justify punishment within the framework of a moral theory which advocates the greatest good for the greatest number? The standard objection to utilitarianism is that any application of the concept of punishment to be consistent must weigh each case in terms of the utilitarian principle. This would apparently allow a judge, for example, to punish a person not with a view to his crime but with a view to the effects of the judgment on society as a whole. This in turn would seem to imply that in some cases one could justify punishment of the innocent.

Rawls argues that this consequence is avoided if one distinguishes between the practice or institution of punishment and particular applications of the practice. An example is used to make the point:

"We might try to get clear about this distinction by imagining how a father might answer the question of his son. Suppose the son asks, 'Why was F put in jail yesterday?' The father answers, 'Because he robbed the bank at B. He was duly tried and found guilty. That's why he was put in jail yesterday.' But suppose the son had asked a different question, namely, 'Why do people put other people in jail?' Then the father might answer, 'To protect good people from bad people' or 'To stop people from doing things that would make it uneasy for all of us; for otherwise we wouldn't be able to go to bed and sleep in peace.' There are two very different questions here. One question emphasizes the proper name: it asks why F was punished rather than someone else, or it asks what he was punished for. The other question asks why we have the institution of punishment: why do people punish one another rather than, say always forgiving one another?"[1]

One justifies a sentence of punishment by referring to the legal system which defines the role of the judge.[2] If one wishes to take issue with the notion of punishment one does so by challenging the practice.

Obviously, this view makes a great deal of sense. A judgment is made on the basis of a particular application of the laws which the judge is appointed to carry out. The utilitarian principle, then, can only be logically applied to the practice as a practice. It cannot be used to assess each particular judical act as it occurs. If this were to occur, the practice itself would be invalidated.

The theory gives an adequate explanation of the actions of a judge. However, does the theory justify those actions? That is to say, do we justify moral actions by referring to practices and then apply our moral principles to the practices themselves? The answer, I think, must be no;

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[1] Rawls, op. cit., p. 5.

[2] This is strikingly similar to Hume's statements concerning relationships of morality to the social structure. See pages 56 and 57.

a counter example will help to clarify the point. A judge in Nazi Germany sentences a Jew to death on the basis of laws laid down by the state. The action is completely explicable in terms of the practice as it is set out by the legal system. There are two questions which we could ask the judge: 1) Can you explain your actions? In this case, Rawls' theory could be applied and the action would be explained by the practice. On the other hand, we could ask 2) Can you justify your actions? The question would not be answered by an appeal to the practice. Such an appeal would be considered irrelevant. For regardless of the laws of the state, we might have grounds for saying that the action of the judge was immoral.

The point which is being made is that there is a clear difference between justification and explanation where morality is involved. If it is proven that a person has become a victim of circumstances or has lost his sanity, an explanation would also be an adequate justification of his actions. However, if a person is considered morally responsible, an explanation by reference to a practice is not an adequate justification. If one discovers that a practice has resulted in an immoral action, one does not accuse the practice of immorality; one accuses the person involved. At the same time one may wish to change the practice because of its undesirable consequences.

Rawls has applied his concept of rules to punishment in an attempt to avoid a specific criticism of utilitarianism. By analyzing the solution which Rawls proposes, light can be shed on the logical status

of moral principles. Utilitarians suggest that punishment is morally justified only if it has an advantageous influence on the future. Retributionists suggest that punishment is morally justified if and only if the individual concerned is guilty (what the person is guilty of is inconsequential at the moment). Rawls suggests that the apparent conflict can be resolved by recognizing the differing logical status of the two concepts of punishment. He proceeds to set up what amounts to a "Chinese box" conception of justification. Punishment which is governed by institutions or practices is inflicted on particular individuals for particular acts which they have committed. In this case the practice is the legal system which can be called justice. The retributionist view of punishment is satisfied by a system which allows only the guilty to be punished. In such a case punishment is justified by referring to the practice of justice which has as one of its rules that those accused and found guilty of crimes will be punished. The practice itself is justified in terms of the utilitarian principle. The practice in this case is justified if it can be shown that the consequences of its application are to the advantage of society.

Rawls is certainly correct when he contends that the method advocated dissolves the problem. But does the method adequately account for the notion of moral justification? In effect, Rawls is suggesting that moral principles can be given varying logical status depending on the situation and practice concerned. Some moral principles, e.g. the utilitarian principle, apply only to practices and not directly to actions. Other

principles, e.g. the retributionist principle, are contained by practices and apply only to particular actions. But is this an accurate view of the notion of moral justification? Is it really the case that some moral principles are justified by practices and others used to justify practices? One need only pose the question to indicate that the nature of moral justification requires more study than Rawls has allowed. However, it could also be said that we have chosen a "border-line case." It is necessary therefore to discuss Rawls' second test case before analyzing at greater length the distinction between explanation and justification.

Rawls states the problem very simply:

"The objection to utilitarianism in connection with promises seems to be this: it is believed that on the utilitarian view when a person makes a promise the only ground upon which he should keep it, if he should keep it, is that by keeping it he will realize the most good on the whole. So that, if one asks the question 'Why should I keep my promise?' the utilitarian answer is understood to be that doing so in this case will have the best consequences. And this answer is said, quite rightly, to conflict with the way in which the obligation to keep promises is regarded."[1]

The resolution of the difficulty is made if one distinguishes between a practice and a particular action defined by that practice. Promising is a practice with rules which do not include the option of using utilitarian reasoning for ignoring one's promise. The utilitarian principle is only applicable to accepting or rejecting the practice itself. Obviously, there are good utilitarian reasons for accepting the practice of promising. Having accepted the practice, as in games, there are no exceptions to the rules.

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[1] Rawls, op. cit., p. 13.

It would appear that in this case the resemblance of the rules of
promising to the rules of a game is particularly close. If one agrees to
a game of chess, one implicitly accepts the rules which characterize the
game. If one makes a promise, one implicitly accepts the rules of the
practice and hence is obligated to carry out one's promise. As Rawls
puts it, "the point of having the practice would be lost if the practice
did allow this excuse," (i.e. the ability to appeal to the utilitarian
principle so as to ignore one's promise).[1]

Rawls has produced an almost air-tight case. When one commits oneself
to carry out a promise one has automatically accepted the obligations
inherent in promising. However, the difficulty in making the distinction
between explanation and justification lies in the concept itself. To promise
is to make a specific move. The practice of promising and the rules which
it entails on the other hand do not include the act of promising at all
but only come into effect after the promise has been made. This is a fine
point, but I think a very important one and more detail is required.

Let us begin by referring back to the practice or institution of
punishment. When punishment is viewed as a practice in a legal code, that
institution itself defines when a specific act of punishment should occur.
That is to say, the practice of punishment is not specifically concerned
with laying down rules concerning the form of carrying out the punishment
although this may well be included. The practice is more specifically
concerned with the circumstances under which specific punishment should

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[1] Ibid, p. 15.

be inflicted. We contended that to refer to the practice was adequate explanation but could not be considered moral justification for the action itself.

Returning to promising, the rules which govern the carrying out of a promise in no way indicate under what circumstances one should actually make a promise. The act of promising is governed by other practices among which is not included the practice of promising. Thus if one is asked for an explanation of an action, one refers to the fact that the person involved made a promise. The action which follows the act of promising is explained by reference to the practice. On the other hand, if one asks for a justification of a promise one is not asking for a description of rules; one is asking "Did the individual have a right to obligate himself in that way? Is he actually in a position to commit himself to the obligations which follow from the act of promising in this particular instance?"

To use one further example, the rules of chess do not apply to the decision to play chess. Once the decision has been made the rules apply. Promising is very similar. The rules which define the practice of promising do not apply until one is actually committed. The act of promising is the decision which puts one in the game. But the game does not define when and how that decision should be made. Referring to punishment, one cannot decide to avoid or enter the legal game of which the practice of punishment is a part. One is automatically in, as it were. This is not true of promises.

Let us assume for the moment that an individual has dealt himself into the game defined by the practice of promising. The various actions which occur while the individual is specifically a part of the game can be explained by reference to the rules. On the other hand, these actions cannot be justified by such reference. For the actions which are fully explained by the rules may be in themselves immoral or for that matter moral. By making a promise the individual may have committed himself to stealing ten dollars. He has followed all the rules but his action is not morally justified.

Let us assume further, that our individual is attempting to decide whether or not to make a promise. Assume also that he is a farmer and needs a new tractor. The practice of farming may serve an adequate explanation of the act of deciding to promise to pay back the loan in exchange for the tractor. However, he can justify the promise not by referring to the practice of farming, but by referring to his willingness and ability to meet his obligations.

The impact of this analysis needs to be explored further at this point.

Rawls is concerned to point out that certain problems in moral philosophy arise through conceptual confusion. His method is to take one particularly attractive moral principle, i.e. all behavior should be guided by a desire to produce the greatest good for the greatest number of people, and to show that certain long standing objections to the principle lose their force if the distinction between practices and particular actions is recognized. He proceeds by arguing that there is a logical

distinction between justifying a particular action and justifying a
practice. To be more specific, the utilitarian principle, if applied to
particular actions such as making a promise, violates commonly accepted
practices which are held to have important moral and social value. That
is to say, if the utilitarian principle was applied directly to particular
instances of punishment, the institution or practice of punishment would
lose its meaning. However, both the principle and the various practices
can be retained if one sets up a conceptual hierarchy which restricts the
application of moral principles to practices.

Given this particular concept of rules, it was necessary to discover
whether Rawls had clarified the situation or violated the concept of moral
justification. The method used to determine the answer was to take the
examples used by Rawls and within that context compare the justification
and the explanation of particular actions. In the case of punishment, it
was argued by counter-example that, although reference to the practice
of punishment is a sufficient explanation of an action, it is not a sufficient
justification. The practice of promising was considered more difficult.
However, it was argued that an act of promising is not justified, or
explained for that matter, by referring to the practice of promising. Once
this distinction is established, the distinction between justification and
explanation becomes relatively clear through the analysis of particular
examples.

The contention is that, although the conceptual distinction raised
by Rawls is useful in describing or explaining human conduct, it is of

no value to the moral philosopher who is concerned with the basis of moral justification and moral judgments.

Nevertheless, three important problems have been raised:

1. What is the conceptual basis for the distinction between explanations of human behavior and moral justification of that behavior? (It should be noted that although examples have been used to illustrate the difference, no attempt has yet been made to offer a theoretical description of the distinction.)

2. What is the logical status of moral principles?

3. What is the relationship of moral principles to actions and practices? Possible answers to these questions will be considered in the third section of the Appendix.

<center>III</center>

The questions raised in the preceding discussion, if given exhaustive answers, would provide one with a conceptual analysis of the fact-value relationship. Such an investigation is clearly beyond the scope of this appendix. However, preliminary comments can be made which will be of value in assessing the impact of Rawls' theory on moral philosophy. With this in mind, a number of points follow which are not necessarily related or exhaustive in nature.

1. "To understand a sentence means to understand a language. To understand a language means to be master of a technique."[1]

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[1] Wittgenstein, op. cit., p. 81.

"The confusion and barrenness of psychology is not to be explained by calling it a 'young science;' its state is not comparable with that of physics, for instance, in its beginnings....For in psychology there are experimental methods and conceptual confusion."[1]

Essentially, Rawls is clarifying a conceptual confusion of the variety found most commonly in the social sciences. His method is that portrayed in the first quotation. One of 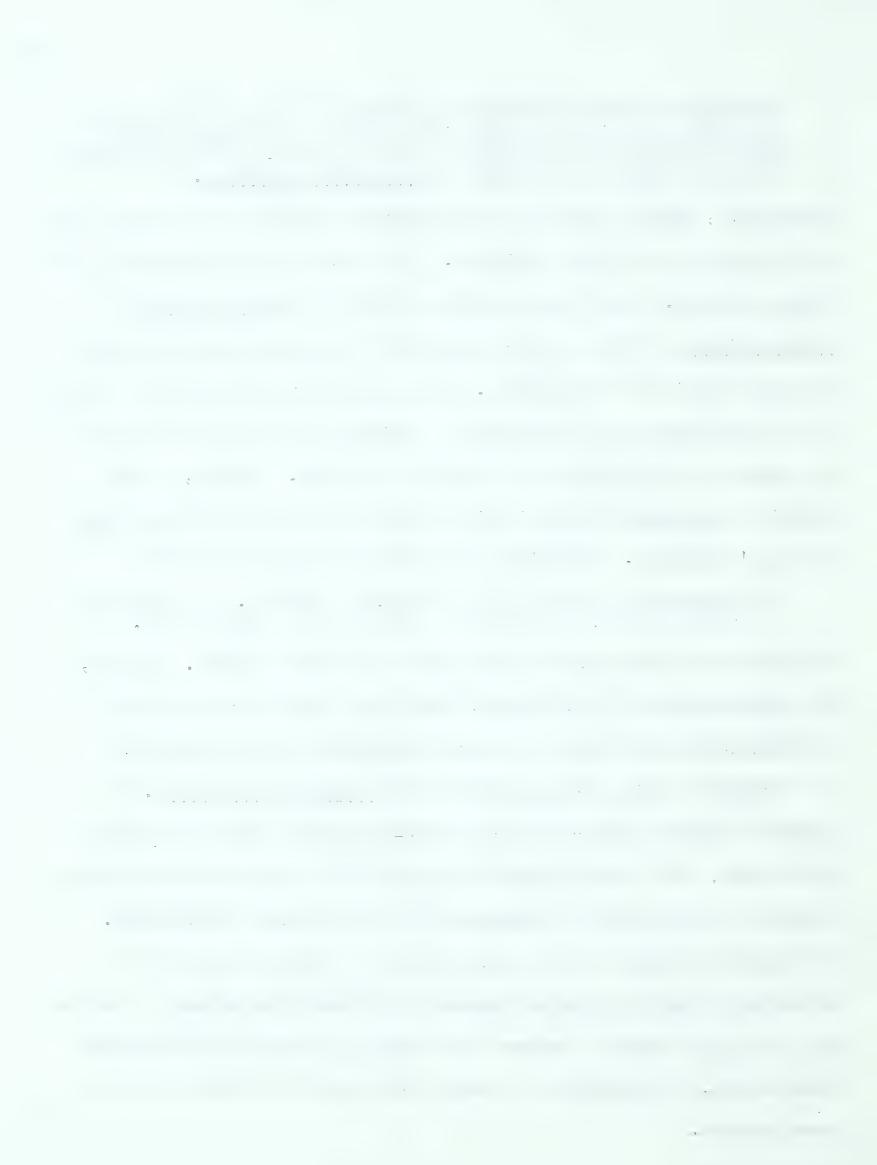the central questions in the Philosophical Investigations is "Why is a word meaningful?" An answer was outlined in the first section of the Appendix. The question could be restated as "How is it that we are able to understand a sentence?" This form of stating the question is not familiar and perhaps less clear. However, it does lead to a restatement of the initial quotation which will shed some light on Rawls' technique. Substituting appropriate words it will read:

To understand an action is to understand a practice. To understand a practice means to be master of a technique (of explanation).

This particular application of the theory is limited in scope. However, the important point is that actions which fall under a practice cannot be understood unless they are related conceptually to that practice.

Peters is making the same point in the Concept of Motivation. To relate an action to the appropriate "rule-following" model is to explain that action. The limited nature of psychological explanation results from a refusal to recognize the importance of this conceptual relationship. The theory or concept of rules advocated by both Peters and Rawls is valuable for theory of conduct because it differentiates between a practice and the actions which it defines thus revealing an important explanatory relationship. The result is a clearer understanding of certain types of human conduct.

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[1] Ibid, p. 232.

If the above argument is valid, it is of considerable interest in terms of Hume's approach to human conduct. One or two psychological or sociological principles are not capable of providing the basis for the explanation of all human actions. Various types of explanations are appropriate in various situations. If this is the case, Hume's approach to human conduct as well as to morality is too restrictive.

2. Explanation is achieved when a specific action has been directly related to a theory or practice. Justification is based on a comparison of an action or practice to a standard or principle. Explanation is concerned with what is the case. Moral judgment is concerned with comparing what is the case with a standard which is accepted as a basis from which one is able to determine what should be the case. As a result, the role played by these two concepts is significantly different.

The first task, then, is to establish the logical status of moral standards or principles. This should make possible an understanding of the relationship between moral principles, and practices or actions.

Wittgenstein comments as follows:

"There is one thing of which one can say neither that it is one metre long, nor that it is not one metre long, and that is the standard metre in Paris.--But this is not to ascribe any extra-ordinary property to it, but only to mark its peculiar role in the language-game of measuring with a metre-rule.--Let us imagine samples of colour being preserved in Paris like the standard metre. We define: 'sepia' means the colour of the standard sepia which is there kept hermetically sealed. Then it will make no sense to say of this sample either that it is of this colour or that it is not.

> We can put it like this: This sample is an instrument of the language used in ascriptions of colour. In this language-game it is not something that is represented, but is a means of representation....It is a paradigm in our language-game; something with which comparison is made. And this may be an important observation; but it is none the less an observation concerning our language-game--our method of representation."[1]

Because of the context in which these remarks are found, their usefulness for our purposes is not immediately clear. However, in this brief passage, Wittgenstein has taken one type of standard, a metre-rule, and indicated what he feels is its logical status as well as its relationship to the language-game. Furthermore, he points out that this standard exists only as part of the language-game. It is an instrument of comparison.

Where morality is involved, the moral standard is the aspect of the language-game which makes the "is-ought" distinction meaningful. If such standards did not exist, that aspect of language which deals with moral concepts would not exist. Of course this is to say no more and no less than if metre-sticks or similar objects did not exist, measuring would be impossible.

Justification or judgment regardless of where they occur imply a comparison. Comparison implies that something is compared with something else. Wittgenstein calls that with which comparisons are made a paradigm. The standard is not itself a rule, theory, or practice. It is not an actual object or event; but it may be the instrument which allows an object or event to be classified or judged.

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[1] Ibid, p. 25.

Thinking specifically in terms of morality, standards of conduct could be applied to either practices or particular actions. Finally, the moral paradigm allows the philosopher to distinguish between a theory of conduct and a moral theory; that is to say, an explanation and a justification of an action.

It would seem to be one of the major tasks of moral philosophy to describe the basis upon which moral standards should be selected, as well as the sorts of actions and practices to which these principles should be applied.

If this approach is valid, there is a logical, and one might add conceptual, difference between explanation and justification at both the level of practices and specific actions.[1]

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[1] This point reinforces the description of the various components in a moral judgment which occurs on pages 92 and 93 above. Further, both points made above reinforce conclusions 2, 3, and 4 which were reached at the conclusion of Chapter IV, page 98.

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